

---

EPISTLES

FOR

*LADIES.*

TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

---



EPISTLES

FOR

LADIES

THE



# EPISTLES FOR LADIES.

By the AUTHORS of  
THE FEMALE SPECTATOR.

*To Beauty's fierce tyrannic Sway,  
All Mankind their Homage pay;  
But soon, alas! it's Pow'r decays,  
A strong, but short-liv'd, Blaze;  
While Wit and Virtue will maintain,  
An uncontested, lasting Reign.*

PRIOR.

VOL. II.

THIRD EDITION.



LONDON:

Printed for T. GARDNER, at *Cowley's-Head*,  
near *St. Clement's Church* in the *Strand*.

M.DCC.LVI.

EPISTLES

RO

ESTADIS

Be the Author of

THE FEMALE SPECTATOR

The first of these is the fact that the  
 second of these is the fact that the  
 third of these is the fact that the  
 fourth of these is the fact that the  
 fifth of these is the fact that the  
 sixth of these is the fact that the  
 seventh of these is the fact that the  
 eighth of these is the fact that the  
 ninth of these is the fact that the  
 tenth of these is the fact that the

1910

VOLUME II

1910



FOR DOZ.

Printed for T. GARDNER, at GARDNER'S, near St. Clement's Church in the Strand.

AY 10001A





# CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME the SECOND.

BOOK VII.

EPISTLE LXXIV.

*From HILLARIA to CLIO, on the inconstancy of wishing to live a long time, yet trembling at the thoughts of growing old.* Page 1

EPISTLE LXXV.

*From CLIO to HILLARIA, given her the reasons for that aversion human nature has to growing old, and pointing out the only means of rendering it agreeable to ourselves, and beneficial to others.* 5

EPISTLE LXXVI.

*From EUPHROSINE to SEMANTHE, giving her an account how she had passed the evening of the preceding day.* 8

EPISTLE LXXVII.

*From EVADNE in the country, to her friend in London, giving her a very diverting account of the behaviour of a gentleman and lady, who were passionately in love without ever having seen each other.* 17

EPISTLE LXXVIII.

*From EVADNE to MELISSA, with the sequel of the story of CLELIA and CLEOMENES.* 21

VOL. II.

A

EPISTLE

# CONTENTS.

## EPISTLE LXXIX.

*From MIRA to IRENE, on having received a letter from her, acquainting her that she had been affronted by BELINDA, and testifying her resolution of being revenged on her; the design of this epistle is therefore to dissuade her from entertaining any design of that kind, by shewing the amiableness of a forgiving temper.*

25

## EPISTLE LXXX.

*From ASTREA to a lady, on the many unhappy diversities of opinion in religious matters, occasioned by the controversies between divines.*

28

## EPISTLE LXXXI.

*From SOPHRONIA to a gentleman, who having received some disappointments in life, could not forbear testifying an unbecoming impatience at fortune, and the baseness of mankind.*

37

## EPISTLE LXXXII.

*From MIRANDA at Winsor, to PANTHEA at Paris, expressing her uneasiness at not having heard from her, and earnestly entreating her to write.*

40

## BOOK VIII.

## EPISTLE LXXXIII.

*From MIRANDA to PANTHEA, wrote the same day with the foregoing, on account of having, after her sending it to the post, received two letters from her, which had lain at the office in Calais, by reason of the mail being detained.*

43

## EPISTLE LXXXIV.

*From SOPHRONIA to MARCIA, who being disappointed of seeing her so soon as she expected, had desired she would send her daughter.*

44

EPISTLE





## CONTENTS.

### EPISTLE LXXXV.

*From MIRA to her neice, on the manner in which she ought to confer favours.* 47

### EPISTLE LXXXVI.

*From BELLIZA to ARAMINTA, severely reprov-  
ing her for encouraging the addressees of a gentle-  
man whom she loved, but who was every way an  
improper match for her, and must infallibly be  
ruined if he persisted in his present intreaties.* 50

### EPISTLE LXXXVII.

*From HILLARIA to CLIO, on the doctrine of PY-  
THAGORAS, and the fondness some people shew  
to animals, while those of their own species are  
neglected.* 54

### EPISTLE LXXXVIII.

[ *In answer to the foregoing.* ]

*From CLIO to HILLARIA, giving her opinion of  
the true cause of the folly she complained of.* 58

### EPISTLE LXXXIX.

*From APAMIA to EUPHROSINE in the country,  
on the pretended conjurer that was expected to shew  
wonders at the theatre in the Hay-market.* 61

### EPISTLE XC.

*From HONORIA to BELLIZA, on having received  
a congratulatory letter from her, on account of a  
large addition to her fortune by the death of a gen-  
tleman who had courted her.* 64

### EPISTLE XCI.

[ *Enclosed in the foregoing.* ]

*From CONSTANTIUS to HONORIA, with the copy  
of his last will, and assuring her that he dies  
without regret, as he shall leave her happy.* 69

## CONTENTS.

### EPISTLE XCII.

*From BELLIZA to HONORIA, expressing her surprise at the resolution she had taken, and persuading her that it was occasioned through an over delicacy, which was rather a fault than a virtue to indulge.*

71

### EPISTLE XCIII.

*MIRA to a lady, who had very much entreated her to go with her to a masquerade, giving her the reasons for her refusal, and her opinion freely of that diversion.*

73

### EPISTLE XCIV.

[ *The Answer.* ]

*From FIDELIA to MIRA.*

76

### EPISTLE XCV.

*From BELLIZA to MILLAMANT, endeavouring to make her sensible of the folly and danger of encouraging a multiplicity of admirers; and persuading her to fix her choice on him she found most deserving among the number of those who addressed her, before she incurred the character of a levity which might lessen her in the esteem of a worthy man.*

78

### EPISTLE XCVI.

*From MARCELLA to POLYDORE, attempting to prove, that more solid happiness was to be found in friendship than in love; and desiring he will let her know how far his opinion coincides with her's in that point.*

82

### EPISTLE XCVII.

[ *In answer to the foregoing.* ]

*From POLYDORE to MARCELLA, testifying his approbation of her notions of friendship; but endeavouring at the same time to persuade her, that*  
between

## CONTENTS.

*between persons of different sexes, the union is more perfect when heightened by love.* 85

### EPISTLE XCVIII.

*From LEONORA in the country, to her sister in London, giving her an account of a very tragical accident that had just happened at the lady's house where she was.* 88

### EPISTLE XCIX.

*From SAPHIRA, MIRANDA, SERENA, and CLIO, to a young gentleman of Oxford, celebrated for his wit and learning, desiring him to write to each of them.* 92

### EPISTLE C.

[ *The Answer.* ]

*From \*\*\*\* to SAPHIRA, MIRANDA, SERENA, and CLIO, excusing himself from writing to any of them in particular, by the difficulty of addressing them in a proper manner.* 93

## BOOK IX.

### EPISTLE CI.

*From CLIO in the country, to HILLARIA in London, acquainting her with the disagreeableness of her situation, and the reasons she had for preparing to return to town, much sooner than she intended on quitting it, with the character of her ladyship.* 96

### EPISTLE CII.

*From THEOPHILA to VIOLANTE, on having received a letter from her, with an account that MARTASINDA had renounced all the faulty pleasures of life, and was turned methodist.* 101

### EPISTLE CIII.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, giving her some description of her brother's fine seat and gardens,*  
A 3
with



## CONTENTS.

*with the manner in which she passes her time there.* 103

### EPISTLE CIV.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, giving her an account of a very surprizing adventure she had met with as she had been taking the air with her brother in the park, and the concern it had involved her in.* 106

### EPISTLE CV.

*From BRILLIANTE to SOPHRONIA, acquainting her, that she is at present extremely divided between love and honour, and entreating her advice how to proceed, so as neither to do a violence to her inclination, nor injustice to a person whose solicitations had prevailed on her to give him hopes of marrying her.* 129

### EPISTLE CVI.

*From SOPHRONIA to BRILLIANTE, in answer to the foregoing.* 141

### EPISTLE CVII.

*From CLEORA to ARDELIA, on the wickedness of scandal, and the inhuman pleasure some people take in exposing real faults, and broaching fictitious ones, to the ruin of the fairest reputation.* 145

## BOOK X.

### EPISTLE CVIII.

*From PEROCLES to a lady, who had asked his opinion concerning apparitions; giving her a very remarkable account of one he had himself seen.* 148

### EPISTLE CIX.

*From PANTHEA at Paris, to MIRANDA at London, in answer to one she had received from that lady,*

## CONTENTS.

*lady, expressing her surprize that she stayed so long in France.* 152

### EPISTLE CX.

*From PANTHEA at Roan, to MIRANDA at London; with the account of a very extraordinary adventure, which had happened just before her arrival there.* 155

### EPISTLE CXI.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, with the continuance of the history of PHILANDER and ALTEZEERA, as begun in a former book.* 162

### EPISTLE CXII.

*From URANIA to MIRA, returning Dr. Burnet's Sacred Theory of the Earth, which that lady had lent to her, and expressing the satisfaction the perusal of those volumes had afforded her, especially that part which related to the millennium, or Christ's thousand years reign on earth.* 168

### EPISTLE CXIII.

[ The answer. ]

*From MIRA to URANIA, praising her comprehensive fine genius, and encouraging her to hope every thing she wished for on so laudable a score.* 171

### EPISTLE CXIV.

*From MIRA to SEMANTHE, on that lady having seemed to accuse herself of weakness; for having been terrified with the late shock of an earthquake.* 174

### EPISTLE CXV.

*From SOPHRONIA, to a gentleman, who was going*

## CONTENTS.

going to marry his daughter to a man of the most dissolute behaviour, debauched principle, and ill-nature, only because he had promised her to him, before he was well acquainted with his character.

177

### EPISTLE CXVI.

From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, with the sequel of the story of PHILANDER and ALTEZEERA.

179

### EPISTLE CXVII.

From MIRA to URANIA, on the second terrible shock of an earthquake, felt on the 8th of March.

190

### EPISTLE CXVIII.

From STELLA in London, to her sister in Paris, returning her thanks for the present she had received from her, and acquainting her with the use she had made of it.

193

### EPISTLE CXIX.

From EUSEBIA to SOPHRONIA, giving her the account of the death of CLOTILDA.

196

## BOOK XI.

### EPISTLE CXX.

From MIRA to AURELIA, concerning the manner in which she educates her daughter, and blaming her for laying somewhat of a too great restraint upon her.

199

### EPISTLE CXXI.

From EUPHROSINE to MIRA, with some verses that lady had desired her to procure a copy of.

201

EPISTLE



## CONTENTS.

### EPISTLE CXXII.

*From EUPHROSINE to CLARISMONDA, on hearing she intended to take a voyage to Spain.* 205

### EPISTLE CXXIII.

*From GLORIANA in the country, to LOTHARIO, in town, on hearing he intended to take a journey on purpose to visit her.* 207

### EPISTLE CXXIV.

[ *In answer to the foregoing.* ]

*From LOTHARIO to GLORIANA.* 211

### EPISTLE CXXV.

*From AMADEA to MELISSA, desiring she would excuse her for not complying with her repeated invitations of coming to visit her at court.* 212

### EPISTLE CXXVI.

*From BELLIZA in town, to HERMIONE in the country, with the account of an intrigue of a very particular nature, which she was accidentally made acquainted with.* 215

### EPISTLE CXXVII.

*From ALINDA to CELIA, on false delicacy in matters of love. Occasioned by that lady's having censured her for confessing an affection for a man, to whom she was to be married in a few days.* 228

### EPISTLE CXXVIII.

*From THEOPHILA to a lady, whose only son, a youth of great hopes, lay at the point of death; exhorting her to patience and resignation to the Divine Will, under this and every other affliction.* 230

EPISTLE

## CONTENTS.

### EPISTLE CXXIX.

*From ORYTHIA to CELEMENA, acquainting her, that she was much less happy than the world imagined, and desiring her advice how to behave, so as to be more easy.*

233

### EPISTLE CXXX.

*From JACINTA to LETITIA, giving her an account of the motives which had induced her to marry LEANDER, and the cause on which they are separated.*

239

## BOOK XII.

### EPISTLE CXXXI.

*From MELLIORA to lady BETTY, with an account of the motives which had induced her to leave her father's house.*

249

### EPISTLE CXXXII.

*From DORIMANT to ARDELLA, returning her a silver medal she happened to drop at his house, in a visit she made to his lady.*

252

### EPISTLE CXXXIII.

*From BELLIZA to HERMIONE, with the sequel of the story of MAGDALENA and CLODIUS, as begun in book XI. page 215.*

253

### EPISTLE CXXXIV.

*From EUSEBIA to MIRA, on that lady's having seemed to hint it, as her opinion, that the present age (bad as it is) does not exceed the former ones, either in folly or impiety.*

256

## EPISTLE

## CONTENTS.

### EPISTLE CXXXV.

*From ASTREA to MIRA, with a poem which that lady had expressed a great desire to read.* 259

### EPISTLE CXXXVI.

*From EMILIA to SOPHRONIA, with an account of the marriage of BRILLIANTE, and the unhappy fate of her forsaken lover.* 263

### EPISTLE CXXXVII.

*From BELLIZA to HERMIONE, with some further particulars concerning CLODIUS, MAGDALENA, and the baronet; and the character of FULVIA.* 267

### EPISTLE CXXXVIII.

*From PORTIA to the E. of \*\*\*\*, on his having attempted to seduce her virtue, after he had conferred some favours on her, under the pretence of an honourable and disinterested friendship.* 270

### EPISTLE CXXXIX.

*From CAMILLA at Berlin, to ASTREA in London; with an account of what she had observed in that court, and a remarkable incident, which happened in her presence, and shewed the great goodness of his Prussian majesty towards his subjects.* 272

### EPISTLE CXL.

*From STELLA to MELANTHE, on being told that lady had ridiculed her retired way of life, imputing it to poverty, and the loss of a lover.* 280

### EPISTLE CXLI.

*From ARANTHE in the country, to OLIVIA in town, in answer to a letter she had received from that*



# CONTENTS.

that lady, testifying her distrelsh of all the pleasures of London, and inviting her to come down, and partake with her the more innocent amusements she enjoyed at the seat of lady B\*\*\*\*: 282

## EPISTLE CXLII.

From MIRA to EUPHROSINE, on false breeding, or an affectation of company and politeness. 284



EPISTLES



# EPISTLES

FOR

## LADIES.

---

BOOK VII.

---

EPISTLE LXXIV.

*From HILLARIA to CLIO, on the inconsistency of wishing to live a long time, yet trembling at the thoughts of growing old.*

*My dear CLIO,*



HAVE been thinking that *human understanding* is no less liable to be unhinged, than the mechanism of the *human frame*. The least jar of a surprise puts it out of tune, and one cannot presently get it into order again.—We have certainly *passions* of the *mind*, as well as *diseases* of the *body*, which we are not aware of, till some sudden accident calls them forth, and the *one* are no less capable of suspending the *faculties* of *reason* for a time, than the *other* are of obstructing that *animal fluid*, to the proper circulation of which we owe our *health* and *vigour*.

VOL. II.

B

I

I WAS led into this reflection by catching myself in a folly, which I shall not be much ashamed of confessing, since, on contemplating some passages my observation supplies me with, I find the foible inherent, in a more or less degree, to the whole species of human kind, though few are ingenuous enough to acknowledge it.

I WAS sitting yesterday in my parlour window, looking carelessly on the people as they passed; when all at once a fellow abruptly presented himself before me, and cried in a hoarse voice, *spectacles*, madam, *fine spectacles*, and at the same time thrust a pair of these nose-saddles within the sash: You cannot imagine, dear *Clio*, how I was shocked; I gave the man a short answer, and immediately drew down the window.—*Good God*, said I to myself, *do I look old enough to be supposed to want spectacles?* not considering that it was the fellow's trade to offer them to every body, and that many people, younger than myself, were obliged to make use of them.—I ran however to my glass, and fancied I perceived what they call the crow's feet appearing at the corners of my eyes.—I looked and looked again, and the more I did so, the more I thought these cruel marks of time were visible; and now recollecting that my last birth-day brought me into my one and thirtieth year, and that a very few more of them would rank me among the number of the aged, I fell into such a fit of the vapours as I had never before known. Is not this unaccountable?—Where now was my understanding?—Where my reason? The little share I have is sufficient to make me know that whoever lives a great while in this world must grow old, and few of us there are who desire to die young;



young; why was not this knowledge at hand to make me easy under the common course of nature?

I DO assure you I had grown two or three hours older, before I could bring myself to be reconciled with the apprehensions that every moment brought me nearer to that so much dreaded stage of life; but, thank heaven, I got the better of it at last, and laughed at the foolish part my imagination had been acting.

THAT we all, however, have a natural aversion to grey hairs and wrinkles, cannot be denied; and that to overcome the uneasiness their approach inflicts, requires the utmost exertion of our reason; yet is not this an inconsistency, a kind of absurdity in our habit of thinking?—We ridicule a thousand lesser follies of mankind, yet pass over that which more than all deserves censure, the being ashamed or afraid of attaining what all the world as well as ourselves would wish to arrive at.—But we would live for ever if we could, and yet be always young; we would annihilate the depredations of time from fifteen to sixty; and even then not be content perhaps to be thought in our decline.

WERE old age terrible to us merely as it is the forerunner of death, or as it is generally attended with infirmities which render life a burden, I should not be so much surprized; but alas we see death and diseases seize on youth and strength; no time of life is a security against either.—Nor is it altogether the apprehension of being deprived of what share of beauty nature may have bestowed upon us, that renders it so

alarming, since that also may be lost by the small-pox, and a thousand other accidents.—No, it is only the *name*, not the *effects*, we so much dread; and I believe most people would rather chuse *deformity with youth*, than *comeliness with old age*.

THIS, and some other propensities of the mind, in my opinion, are sufficient to convince any thinking person of the impotence of *human understanding*, and oblige us all to own with the poet, that

*Reason in man is but the twinkling lamp  
Of wand'ring life, that wakes and winks by  
turns;  
Fooling the follower betwixt shade and shining.*

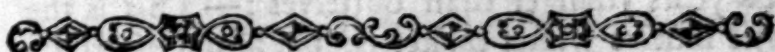
YOU will imagine by my being so serious, that I have not yet quite got over the fright the man put me into, and indeed I am not sure whether I have or not; but be that as it will, I have resolution enough to wish from the very bottom of my heart, that you and I may grow old in friendship, and that whatever effect time may have upon our *persons*, our *minds* may remain as now united; which will be a balance against the mortifications in the power of the old gentleman with the hour-glass, to

My dear CLIO,

Yours, with the most perfect amity,

HILLARIA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE LXXV.

*From CLIO to HILLARIA, given her the reasons for that aversion human nature has to growing old, and pointing out the only means of rendering it agreeable to ourselves, and beneficial to others.*

*My dear HILLARIA,*



YOU must forgive me when I tell you I laughed very heartily at the lively description you give of the fright you were in, on seeing the terrible man with the spectacles: You might have apprehended it would have had a contrary effect, however, on me, if you had considered I am four years older than yourself; for I am ready to join with you in opinion, that there is nothing more shocking, especially to our sex, than to be thought in years; though we cannot help knowing it, yet we would fain unknow it, and seldom look upon those as our friends who remind us of it:— Yet do I not look upon this aversion to old age to be so great a weakness as you seem to think it. — It is not because we have lived a long time, and consequently by the course of nature must be near our dissolution; neither is it because the loss of beauty seems to us so great an evil; neither is it altogether through the fears of those infirmities generally, though not always, felt in age, that makes the approach of that æra so dreadful to our apprehension; but there is another misfortune which you have not mentioned, that for the most part attends it; which is, be-



ing treated with contempt by every one who is a few years younger than ourselves:—This is the true motive which makes people afraid of growing old, and ashamed when they are so.—Every one, even the aged themselves, have a prejudice in favour of youth.—Youth attracts the love, the respect, the services of all the world; while age may live alone unpitied, unregarded.—Impute the folly, therefore, my dear *Hillaria*, not so much to those who dread being old, as to those whose behaviour gives them cause to do so.—As you justly observe, a long life is a blessing every one is desirous of attaining, we all do every thing in our power, in order to preserve it; here therefore lies the absurdity, to despise that in others, which we take so much pains to arrive at ourselves.—Yet thus it is, and thus I doubt not it will ever be, while the world continues.—The only way therefore to ward off the slights old age is liable to receive, is to lay up in youth a stock of knowledge wherewith to entertain ourselves when no body else will think it worth their while to entertain us:—If we make good use of our prime years, we shall have less reason to regret being left alone, than they should have who shun our conversation: Besides, there are ways to make age agreeable to others as well as to ourselves; not by endeavouring to conceal it by an affectation of youth, or by assuming the privilege of reproving with austerity, but by preserving a medium between the grave and gay in our behaviour, and by rebuking the faults we see in others rather by example than precept.—When I see a gaudy butterfly coquet of three-score, flying from visit to visit, pluming herself on the elegance of her taste in dress, and screwing herself into a thousand antick postures in order to shew

shew the agility of her joints, I admire the ridicule she is treated with:—When I hear an antiquated prude take upon her to give lessons to those of better understanding than herself, inveigh against all diversions how innocent soever, and censure even a chearful disposition as an unpardonable crime, I do not wonder that she is despised and avoided.

THE worst that can be said of age is, that it magnifies the errors, and renders the virtues of the person less conspicuous: It is our business therefore to *correct* the one, and *improve* the other, before we arrive at that stage of life in which nothing will be excused, that proceeds from levity and want of judgment. Each year, as it furnishes new matter of observation should add to our knowledge; how despicable then must age appear, unless experience has improved the talents we received from nature.—Be assured, that how old soever we grow, and how much soever impaired in our *outward form*, we shall meet with no severity from those whose treatment is worth our notice, if we have taken due care to beautify our *minds*, and endeavour'd to verify the character Mr. Waller gives of age;

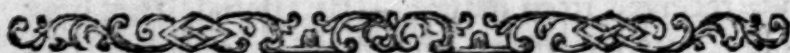
*The soul with nobler resolutions deckt,  
The body stooping does herself erect.  
Clouds of affections from our younger eyes,  
Conceal that happiness which age describes;  
The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,  
Lets in new light through chinks which time has  
made.  
Stronger by weakness, wiser we become,  
As we draw near to our eternal home.*

BUT we have a greater authority than Mr. *Waller*, which tells us, that the sure way to make age honourable, is to have it overtake us in righteousness. Let us therefore, my dear *Hillaria*, endeavour to profit by the mistakes of others, and instead of counting how our years run on, examine how our knowledge increases; what progress we have made in rooting out our darling follies, and planting the beneficial seeds of piety and morality in our hearts.—To succeed in this attempt, I am confident will afford us an inward satisfaction, infinitely superior to all we could receive from our toilette, or the flatteries of the world, while in the bloom of youth.—Adieu, my dear *Hillaria*, believe me,

With an unfeigned sincerity,

Yours, &c.

CLIO.



## EPISTLE LXXVI.

*From EUPHROSINE to SEMANTHE, giving her an account how she had passed the evening of the preceding day.*

REMEMBER that once playing at questions and commands, a witty lady in company, whose turn it was to question, demanded of her subject what wit was like? To which he replied, like your ladyship's bottle of *Sal Volatile*, poignant at first opening, but on being too much handed about, loses all its flavour, and becomes quite insipid.—I then thought the comparison just, and I have since



since had many occasions of bringing it fresh into my mind ; but never found it more strongly verified than last night.

You must know I went to visit *Aspasia*, whom I had not seen for some time, and found her, as she always is, encircled with a number of the gay world :—They were all in what they call top spirits, more speakers than hearers, and as many fine things as would have furnished two or three conversations, were thrown away by being spoken all at once ;—every one being so full of what they had to say themselves, that seldom any attention was given to the words of another :—This torrent of wit continued, I believe, for the space of an hour, to flow with the utmost rapidity, when all on a sudden it sunk into a calm, and we were all as dumb and solemn as mourners at a funeral.—One lady sat counting the sticks of her fan ; another amused herself with jingling the drops of the pendants in her ears ; a third was examining her little finger nails ; a fourth held her snuff-box in one hand, and whirl'd it round and round with the other :—Nor were the gentlemen more alert ;—one employed himself with stroking the *Dresden* of his ruffles ; another had his eyes fixed upon the fire ; a third sat patting his knee ;—in fine, had the court of dulness to have been represented in a picture, the painter might have taken it to the life from us in our different attitudes.

*AR STO* was the first of the whole company who awaked from this lethargy of mind, and looking round, What, said he, are you all retired into yourselves ? Come, ladies, I will propound a question to you, and will expect every

every one of you to answer in turn. — What, setting aside *faith*, the *grace* of God, and all things appertaining to *religion*, do you think the most desirable thing in life? And first addressing himself to *Aspasia*, I desire your opinion, madam.

I KNOW not, answered she modestly, why you should expect me to speak first, when there are so many in company much more capable of answering; but since you enjoin it, shall not hesitate to tell you, that according to my judgment there is nothing so desirable as *grandeur*.

YOUR reason, madam! rejoined *Aristo*. Because, said she, it attracts the homage of the inferior world, conceals our vices, and renders our virtues more conspicuous.

HE then turned to her that sat next, who subscribed to the same opinion *Aspasia* had given, that high births and titles were the first things to be wished for on earth; but, on his speaking to the third, I cannot, said she, think with these ladies: *Beauty* seems to me to have infinitely the preference over every other blessing we can be possessed of, because it attracts the love and admiration of all who see it.

NOW would heaven grant my prayers, cried *Lamara* hastily, it would be to indue me with a superiority of *wit*, because wit enables us to defend ourselves if attacked, and to offend others whenever we have a mind, without their daring to retort.

WELL, above all things, give me *riches*, said *Lutezia*; riches can purchase all things, they supply

ply all the defects of birth, of beauty, of wit, and command more followers, than all of them put together; in fine, whoever has them, has every joy this world can give.—It is all, and all in all, as Mr. Dryden has made *Jupiter* say,

————— *When I made  
This gold, I made a greater god than Jove,  
And gave my own omnipotence away.*

YET said the discreet *Sophia*, neither riches, nor grandeur, nor beauty, nor wit, can afford any real satisfaction, without *health*.—*Health* is the salt of life, as *Cowley* says, and gives a relish to the whole:—An uninterrupted *health* should therefore be my choice; and I have the authority of one whose skill has often recovered it, when well nigh lost, for my opinion in this point, who addresses her in these terms:

*Health, blooming goddess, most auspicious power;  
Whose blessings mortals next to life implore:  
Mankind, as you vouchsafe to smile, or frown,  
Find ease in chains, or anguish in a crown.*

It was now my turn to speak, and having well weighed the arguments urged by these ladies in defence of their different sentiments, should certainly have conformed to her's who spoke last, if the example of *Beaticia* had not that moment came into my mind.—*Beaticia*, who but a few years past was what Mrs. Behn describes in a favourite character in one of her plays,

*Noble by birth, but nobler by endowments:  
Fair as imagination paints young angels:*



*Chearful as birds that welcome in the morn :  
 Lovesome and gay as was the first Corinna,  
 That charm'd our best of poets :  
 Witty as fancy makes the revelling gods,  
 And equally as bounteous in her blessings.*

BUT is now, alas, by perverse accidents, stript of almost all her fortune, deprived by death of her nearest friends, and abandoned by the greatest part of those who survive, all her limbs enfeebled by a long fit of sickness, incapable of enjoying any one pleasure in life, yet retains the same vigour of mind as ever, the same sweetness, chearfulness, and composure, complains not of her fate, and not only *seems*, but really *is*, contented with her lot, severe as others think it. I had seen this miracle of suffering virtue but the day before, and it was to her I was indebted for remembering that *content*, by far exceeded all the blessings I had heard enumerated ; I therefore had the boldness to dissent from all who had given their opinions before me, and quoted for my authority the story of *Beaticia*, which was not unknown to some of the company, and ended what I had to say with these lines from a late eminent poet.

*Content alone can all our ills redress ;  
 Content, that other name for happiness !  
 'Tis equal if our fortunes should augment,  
 And stretch themselves to the same vast extent  
 With our desires, or those desires abate,  
 Shrink and contract themselves to fit our state.  
 We to ourselves may all our wishes grant,  
 And nothing coveting, can nothing want.*

I HAD the satisfaction to perceive what I had  
 alledged

alledged was unanswerable by those ladies who had maintained different opinions, and that the men in general approved my position: — It was, however, left to *Aristo*, who had propounded the question, to decide which of us had best resolved it; which he did in these terms: You, madam, said he to *Aspasia*, and the lady who sits next you, are greatly mistaken in the preference you both give to grandeur, as we have many living instances that titles do not *always* excite respect, but, according to the means by which they have been acquired, and the purposes they are made to serve, may be called the disgrace or ornament of man. Titles render infamy more visible and more deformed; how few then can find happiness in the possession of this wish? Besides, when we consider the prodigious changes that happen, which we have not only read of but seen, the noblest-born sunk and degraded even to scorn; who that stands high can assure himself he shall not have a sudden fall, as Sir *Charles Sedley* justly expresses it.

*Greatness ne'er envied when well understood,  
Thou art no real, but a seeming good:  
Sick at the heart thou in the face look'st well;  
Who foolishly for thee his peace doth sell,  
In his exalted state can only gain  
To be more wretched than the vulgar can.*

THEN, madam, continued he, to the third, it must be confessed that beauty is a most desirable thing, but then where is the beauty that has a charm for every heart? — Tho' its power is universal, no single she had ever yet, or ever can have, that power lodged in herself. — What is ravishing in the eyes of some men, is quite dis-

disagreeable to those of others, as Mr. Cowley tells you,

*The cause of love can never be assign'd,  
'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind;*

As your wish, therefore, madam, is an impossibility in nature, I must give it against you entirely, and come to the lady who places *wit* in the first class of human blessings; and says she does so, because it supplies the means of defending ones self, and of offending others.—Now in my opinion what you have alledged in favour of this quality, is an argument against it, because it cannot be commendable to be quick in returning affronts, much less to give them unprovoked, especially to those who are not in a condition to make an adequate return.—*Wit*, thus applied, may be compared to lightning, blasting whatever it lights upon:—It is a quality, except accompanied with a great fund of good-nature, the most pernicious of all others to society.

LAMARA looked a little confounded at hearing the choice she had made so severely censured; and *Aristo* imagining, perhaps, he had exceeded the bounds of politeness in what he had said, endeavoured to soften it by proceeding in these terms:—I will not, cried he, suppose your ladyship had any other view in what you urged, than to make trial whether complaisance or sincerity would have the greatest share in my decision; but, however, as I am here set up for judge, I think myself bound to act with impartiality, and am therefore obliged to pronounce sentence against *wit*, not only because an ill use  
may



may be made of it, but because, however harmless it may be, it is a very trifling perfection when left to itself, and is not directed by good sense.— It may give a sudden spring to conversation, and enliven, for a moment, but, like all other spirits, immediately evaporates and leaves a certain languor behind, as we all just now experienced.

NONE of us could forbear laughing as he spoke this, at the remembrance of the resverie we had been in, before he found out this way of making us once more thinking beings; we offered no interruption, however, but suffered him to proceed in his judgment, which he did in this manner.

As for you, madam, said he to *Lutesia*, with an air that expressed the deference he is known to pay that lady, I dare believe, before I speak, that you are sure of my declaring in favour of the choice you seem to make of *riches* before any other qualification; I say seem, for I flatter myself your heart has no connection with your words in this point; I shall take the liberty, notwithstanding, to put you on your guard, against a prejudice so often fatal to the fair sex, by reminding you of Mr. *Cowley's* advice:

*Take heed, take heed, thou lovely maid,  
Nor be by glitt'ring ills betray'd;  
Thyself for money! oh, let no man know  
The price of beauty fall'n so low;  
What dangers ought'st thou not to dread,  
When love that's blind, is by blind fortune led.*

WHEN *Sophia* spoke, pursued he, turning to that lady, I thought the preference she gave to  
health

*health* too just for any thing that could come after it to overthrow. *Juvenal's* admonition to contract our wishes, is certainly worthy the regard of every one.

*Forgive the gods the rest; and be confin'd,  
To health of body, and content of mind.*

HEALTH excels all other blessings, and the want of it can be compensated by nothing but content:—No true pleasure is to be found without both; but thus much I must say, that as health does not always bring content with it, though it ought to do so, and content has the power of supplying the want of health, the balance is on the side of content, and I must therefore decree in favour of *Euphrosine*, to whose choice there is no possibility of an exception.

EVERY one agreed to the decision of *Aristo*, yet he made a very handsome apology to the ladies whom he had been obliged to contradict, saying, that he proposed the question merely for amusement, and to quicken a conversation which began to grow spiritless; and therefore he hoped not to be reproached hereafter, for any thing he had advanced; protesting at the same time, that he had done extreme violence to his inclination, in opposing the sentiments of ladies, who, tho' they had given their opinions somewhat too hastily on the question he proposed, he was sensible knew much better than himself how to have resolved it.—He concluded with allowing, that grandeur, beauty, wit, and riches, were all of them things to be desired, and that a small portion of them, with health and content, would make the perfection of mortal happiness.

THIS

THIS reconciled all, and the company continued in perfect good-humour during the whole time we stayed together, which was till near twelve. — We returned not indeed to that confusion of wit, which *Aristo* had so well rallied; every one spoke in their turn, and spake only what they had considered; — the conversation was lively, but serious and improving: I wish my paper would admit of sending you the particulars. — What I have said, however, may, perhaps, serve to amuse you, at a time when you cannot stir abroad, and have little to entertain you at home.

AND now, my dear *Semanthe*, wishing you a perpetual round of health and content, I take my leave, and am, with the sincerest friendship,  
Yours, &c.

EUPHROSINE.



### EPISTLE LXXVII.

From *EVADNE* in the country, to her friend in London, giving her a very diverting account of the behaviour of a gentleman and lady, who were passionately in love without ever having seen each other.

Dear *MELISSA*,



THE concern you express for my being so long coop'd up in a little country town, is very obliging, because I dare promise myself the kind things you say on that occasion are the dictates of a heart warm in my interest. — I should, indeed, have a very sad time

time



time of it here, if it were not for an adventure, which has given some life to the conversation of our gentry, and in which I believe you will find something extraordinary enough to divert you, even amidst that circle of pleasure with which you are perpetually surrounded.

ON my first arrival at \*\*\*\*, I came acquainted with a young lady called *Clelia*; as I found her infinitely more agreeable than any other of those who came to compliment me, and indeed much more than I could have expected to meet with at such a distance from the place, which I always looked upon as the only seat of politeness, I was quite charmed with her behaviour, and she appeared no less pleased with mine: We soon grew extremely intimate, yet not enough for her to entrust me with the secret of her heart, and it was from others that I first learned, she had been for a long time deeply in love with a gentleman of a neighbouring county, whom she had never seen, and that he, with as little knowledge of her, was at least equally captivated.—I will tell you by what means.

*CLELIA* has a very pretty genius to poetry, which, to amuse herself and friends, she exercises on every occasion.—A little copy of verses she had wrote on the innocent satisfaction of a rural life, happened to be shewn to him, and he having a great taste that way, and written several good things himself, was so much charmed with the product of this lady's brain, that he would needs employ his muse in writing a compliment on her verses: This was presented to her by a friend of his who was acquainted with her.—The manner of this address seemed so elegant to her,

her, that she imagined herself under a kind of obligation to return it, and, as I said before, being extremely fond of shewing her interest in *Parnassus*, sent him her thanks in heroics for the approbation he had testified of her poetry:— This second proof of her wit and politeness, drew another epistle from him; that, an answer from her; that, from him again; and so on from one to the other, till, at last, what was meant only as gallantry, became converted into a serious admiration; and as others *look* themselves into love, they *wrote* themselves into the most violent passion that I have heard of since the days of *Oroondates* and *Statira*:—He fancies her all angel; she considers him no less than a demi-god:—The extravagant ideas they have of each other's perfections, render them diffident of their own, and as ordinary lovers are impatient for an interview, these are no less fearful of meeting.—There was the other day a great horse-race on the *Downs*;—few persons of any note for forty miles round were absent; but *Clelia*, who, tho' before her correspondence with *Cleomenes*, for so he is called, would not for half her fortune have been deprived of that pleasure, now could not be prevailed on to go, for fear of being seen by *Cleomenes*; and *Clomenes*, tho' his own horse was one that ran, avoided the sport, lest he should not be able to conceal himself from *Clelia*.

IN fine, this *Platonic* passion, with which they were mutually inspired, became the whole talk of the country, and as there was no disparity between them, either as to birth or fortune, many of the friends on both sides laboured to bring them into sentiments more like those of people

people of this world; but all that could be said in order to persuade them to see each other was ineffectual.—The answer that both gave was, that they were conscious of not deserving that esteem which a distant correspondence had excited, and were loth to forfeit it by a nearer acquaintance.

As *Clelia* now knows I am in the secret, I take the liberty of rallying her with all the severity I am capable of, on this caprice.—She takes it, however, in good part, and shews me all the letters she every day receives, with the answers she sends back.—Nothing certainly ever was more passionate on his side, more tender on her's: I tell her I would have her change her name of *Clelia* into that of *Sappho*, and that *Cleomenes* ought to assume that of *Phaon*.

I CANNOT help saying, that this is one of the prettiest, as well as most innocent amours I ever heard of:—Here is all the love, all the gallantry, all the amusement and eclat of the passion, without any of its pains;—both parties are satisfied and secure of their conquest; each is contented with the possession of the other's heart, and seems to aim at no farther gratification:—So little are they of *Cowley's* opinion.

*When souls mix 'tis a happiness,  
But not compleat, till bodies too combine,  
And closely as our minds together join:  
But half of heaven the souls in glory taste,  
Till by love in heaven at last,  
The bodies too are plac'd.*

WHETHER the coldness is real, or only affected,



fected, through an excess of timidity, I will not, however, be positive, but a plot is laid to try their constitutions more effectually, and bring them together in spite of themselves.—It will be executed in a few days, and as I shall be present at the scene, will not fail to give you a particular account of the success, till when I am, my dear *Melissa*,

Yours, &c.

EVADNE.



## EPISTLE LXXVIII.

*From EVADNE to MELISSA, with the sequel of the story of CLELIA and CLEOMENES.*

Dear MELISSA,



Do not wonder at your impatience to know the result of an amour so romantic as that of *Clelia* and *Cleomenes*; we who are the denizens of dear St. *James's* have but little idea of those visionary transports:—The lovers who address us are for more substantial joys than those of theory, and some of us too have been fools enough to be of their opinion.—What a figure would these country lovers make in the *Mall*! They would certainly be pointed at as creatures of another species; but I can now tell you, that there is some likelihood they will grow modern in time, if they are not already so in their hearts.—They have seen and been some time in company with each other, and I do not find that this interview has been of any prejudice to what we call *love*, tho' it may be the overthrow of their *Platonic* system.

THE

THE stratagem I told you of for that purpose, was contrived in this manner:—A relation of *Clelia's* has lately built a fine new house, about five miles from this town; some of the apartments being finished, though not yet sufficiently compleated for them to inhabit, the gentleman and his wife desired *Clelia*, myself, and some other friends, to go one day and drink tea there, in order, as was pretended, to have our opinion of the building:—This request being readily complied with, we all went on horieback:—The same day a gentleman who was in the secret, and a great intimate of *Cleomenes*, made him a visit, and in a careless manner as without design, asked him to take a ride that afternoon, which he having agreed to, the other led him to the place where we were:—*Here is a handsome house built here*, said he, *I am acquainted with the owner, let us go in, and see it*:—*With all my heart*, replied *Cleomenes*: On which they knocked at the gate, and *Clelia's* kinsman seeing them from the window, ran down, and persuaded them to come up and drink tea.—The friend of *Cleomenes*, to prevent that shy lover from suspecting there was any design in what he had done, made some excuses for the interruption, saying, he came only to look at the house as he was passing that way, and should not have made so abrupt a visit, had he known there was any company there.

In fine, they came up, and the stranger was introduced by his name, which we could perceive made *Clelia* give a sudden start, but appeared much more confounded, when the friend of *Cleomenes*, who it was agreed should do all the mischief, as he could be the least suspected of design, took an occasion of addressing himself  
also

also to her by her name. — The consternation of *Cleomenes* at hearing it, was, I think, superior to that which *Clelia* had been in; — but certainly never did two people of sense look so silly as they did: — *Cleomenes*, on knowing he was in company with his fair correspondent, was under a necessity of saying something like what he had so often wrote, and *Clelia* was no less obliged to thank him for the many polite addresses she had received from him. — But, dear *Melissa*, I can give you no better idea of the behaviour of them both, than by saying it was somewhat like that celebrated, though more heightened scene in the play of *Grief A-la-mode*, between lord *Hardy* and lady *Charlotte*; — as sometimes the expressions they made use of were crouded and scarce intelligible, at others drawled out, with a long pause between every sentence.

NEVER had I experienced so much command over myself as at this juncture to restrain from laughing, and I believe each of the company was equally embarrassed. — We all kept our countenances pretty well, however, and I believe neither of the lovers had any suspicion of the deceit imposed on them.

WE, who were in the plot, have had a good deal of diversion about it, though I must own it might have proved of an unlucky consequence either to one or the other of them, if a liking of the *persons*, had not been mutually answerable to that of the *mind*: but, thank God, no such ill accident has happened: *Cleomenes* thinks *Clelia* all that is exquisite in womankind, and *Clelia* allows *Cleomenes* to be the most agreeable man she ever saw. — I caught her the other day



as I came upon her unawares, breathing out this rhapsody, which I know not if she had made herself, or had read in any of the poets :

*Less fair are orchards in their summer pride,  
Adorn'd with trees on some clear river's side:  
Less fair are vallies, their green mantles spread,  
Or mountains with tall cedars on their head.*

**CLEOMENES**, since this interview, and being informed of the obliging things she says of him, has gained courage enough to intreat her permission to visit her, and she, finding an additional warmth in the expressions of the letters she now receives from him, has consented to admit him. — It is not to be doubted that this passion so violent, and so long a time pent up on both sides, will shortly break out into a mutual confession, — and then there is no more to do, but away to the altar of *Hymen* : — Till that incident arrives, none of us dare tell either of them how they have been trepann'd into happiness, but the detail will serve well enough to heighten the mirth of a wedding entertainment. — Adieu, my dear *Melissa*,

Yours, &c.

EVADNE.



EPISTLE



## EPISTLE LXXIX.

*From MIRA to IRENE, on having received a letter from her, acquainting her that she had been affronted by BELINDA, and testifying her resolution of being revenged on her; the design of this epistle is therefore to dissuade her from entertaining any design of that kind, by shewing the amiableness of a forgiving temper.*

*My dear IRENE,*

**T**HOUGH I am seldom long in debt for obligations my friends confer on me by their letters, yet I make the more haste to answer yours, because I would not wish you to continue one moment, if possible, in the humour you seem possessed of at present, and am apt to flatter myself from the partial regard you have always treated me with, that what I shall urge to you on this head, will have its proper weight.

I AM extremely concerned to find *Belinda* has behaved to you in the manner you inform me, but am inclined to believe it proceeded rather from the too much gaiety, I may say the levity of her temper, than from any premeditated design to make you uneasy; and if so, she becomes an object rather of your pity than resentment, as it will in time bring on her the contempt, instead of the admiration, she is so ambitious of attracting from the world.—You need not doubt but she will have her mortifications, without

your contributing towards them:—To return pique for pique, has something in it beneath that greatness of mind, I have observed in you on other occasions, and should you now be hurried into it by the dictates of an unruly passion, I am certain you would be ashamed of it on reflection:—Had you not been prevented from shewing your resentment by company coming in just as the affront was given, you tell me that by this time, you should have thought no more of it, but as things have happened, you think it justice to repay injury with injury.—Indeed, my dear, this is a very fallacious way of reasoning: According to my way of judging, when the injured person revenges an affront, he generally proceeds too far. Resentment breeds malice, and malice begets cruelty; and when revenge is cruel, the first offender becomes an object of compassion. In this case the tables are turned, and the censure is transferred to the most blameable. This rule of judging is reasonable; for he who *sensibly* feels a *slight* affront, that perhaps was not *intended*, is a record against himself, when he *designedly* repays it with a greater evil; whereas, forgiveness fixes the blame on the first offender, *heaps coals of fire on his head*, and exalts the soul to that magnanimity which is the ornament of human nature.—The *Italians* have a *proverb* very much in vogue among them,

*Pardonare e da angelo,  
Scordarsi e da bestia.*

*To forgive is like an angel,  
To forget is like a beast.*

HUMAN nature, as a late noble author observes,



serves, is half *celestial*, half *terrestrial*:—Its share of the *heavenly* is shewn in acts of benevolence and mercy; its *earthly* in those of cruelty, oppression, avarice, and other gross propensities:—It is the business of *reason* to cherish and improve the *one*, and to correct the *other* as much as in us lies; now if we retaliate the offences committed against us, it is a contradiction to that noble principle, and debases ourselves.—It is indeed but a petty mischief with which you threaten *Belinda*, but perhaps that petty mischief is all in your power, and you would be more severe, did chance, or her own indiscretion, present you with the means:—Be wary therefore, I beseech you, how you indulge a disposition ungenerous and unchristian; mean in *men*, but most unbecoming in our sex, whose characteristic is gentleness and sweetness.

I do not advise you however to adhere only to one part of the proverb above quoted:—I would not urge you to *forget*, though I would have you *forgive*.—Understand me rightly on this point of not *forgetting* injuries. I only mean, that the remembrance of them is natural, and perhaps necessary to self-defence, by guarding us from the future arts of an adversary; but we should forget them in a moral sense: we should not, on any occasion, *remember them to his hurt*.—There are not many things which to me appear more ridiculous, than when people affront and quarrel with each other, and after both parties have wreaked all their malice, become reconciled and as good friends as ever, perhaps even more so than before, to shew how much they can *forgive* and *forget*, yet on the first occasion break off again, and renew their animosity.

fitly. — This I have seen happen various times, but never without incurring censure from the sensible part of those who are witnesses of the folly.

I SHOULD be extremely sorry to find my dear *Irene* guilty of a levity which would so much tarnish the lustre of her other amiable qualities. — It would give me a pain to hear you had put it in *Belinda's* power to use you ill a second time by conversing with her, equal to that I should feel on your persisting in your present resolution of revenge; both which to avoid, I am confident, will afford you the greatest peace of mind, as well as increase that love and esteem you have acquired from all who know you truly; among whom there can be none more anxious for your happiness and reputation, than,

My dear *Irene*,

Yours, sincerely,

MIRA.



## EPISTLE LXXX.

*From ASTREA to a lady, on the many unhappy diversities of opinion in religious matters, occasioned by the controversies between divines.*

*Madam,*

**I** WENT yesterday to visit *Lucia*, who you know has kept her chamber some time; I found her in a very ill state of health, so ill indeed, that her physicians despair of her recovery; but the pains her dis-

distemper occasioned were nothing in comparison to those of her mind. I shall die, *said she*, my dear *Astrea*, I shall die, but if any one should ask me in what persuasion as to matters of religion I shall die, it is impossible for me to give any determined answer. I am divided between the different sects, and though I am a christian, know not of what church. — I then found she had been reading books of controversy, first between those of the churches of *Rome* and *Greece*; then the arguments brought against both by the church of *England*, then between that and the *Dissenters*, and at last between the infinite numbers of sects, which not only dissent from, but oppose each other with the utmost vehemence. I said all in my power to persuade her to continue in the faith in which she had been educated, and of the purity of which there was no room to doubt; but what would my weak arguments avail against those of so many learned men she had read, who all seemed right, till compared with their antagonists!

THIS, and many other instances, I have known of the like nature, make me think it would be happy for some people if they could not read, since what they indulge in themselves as a laudable curiosity of being instructed in the truth, often serves only to distract, instead of informing the mind. — And, indeed, how should it be otherwise? When we find men of equal learning and abilities so opposite to each other in the interpretation of the sacred text, so industrious in spreading and propagating their different opinions, and so warm in maintaining them, that they are ready to seal it with their blood, how impossible is it for those of less capacities to



judge which is in the right, or indeed whether either are so?

It is, I fear, in some measure, to these unhappy divisions among those who expound the gospel, that infidelity, a bare-faced abandoned infidelity, through the various ranks of mankind, owes its progress.—Faith, when it once becomes staggered, is in great danger of being entirely overthrown; and I am sorry to observe the enemies of christianity triumph in seeing that work done for them, by the zeal without knowledge of churchmen, which all their own arguments would never have been able to accomplish: If the house which is divided against itself cannot stand, we may justly be under the same apprehensions on the score of religion; but if not altogether so, it will at least cease to shine with that lustre it would do, if its professors were more united.

BUT as the pure and unmixed doctrines delivered to us by our Blessed Saviour and his apostles, have been for a long succession of years, and I fear will still be so, wrested to serve the particular purposes of ambition, ostentation, or an affectation of peculiarity, by some misguided zealots, the only way to avoid being led astray, is to read none of their controversial writings, but apply wholly to the scriptures themselves; the plain text will be sufficient for the conduct of our lives both in civil and religious matters, without endangering the sanity of our brains, with those parts which appear too abstruse for our own judgment to unfold, and in which we can so little depend on others for satisfaction.

I REMEMBER some time ago to have met with a little book, which though it carries the air of a romance, and is wrote in that style, contains a very useful allegory on this subject.—The author, after describing the most beautiful island that ever was, situated in some part or other of that immensity of waters which lie beyond the moon, tells us, that it had been governed for an infinite number of ages, by kings of an uninterrupted line, but that male-issue at last failing, it became subject to a princess called *Eovaai*, the only daughter of the last monarch, whose name indeed has slippt my memory; it is, however, of little importance to the story; it is enough to say he was a very good king, and had enjoyed a long and happy reign.—When he found his dissolution near, he called his daughter to him, and after giving her some necessary precepts for governing, he took a jewel from his breast and fixed it upon hers, charging her to preserve it with more care than life, never to trust it in any other hands, and above all never to suffer her curiosity to explore what was contained in it. While, said he, you preserve this precious gift delivered by the gods themselves, you, and the people you are born to rule, will be perfectly happy; but if once you part from it, or let it be pryed into by any inquisitive eyes, you, and all under you, will be accursed; woes beyond a name will fall upon you, and every kind of plague be the portion of this devoted island. The princess promised an entire observance of his commands, and of this in particular.

FOR some years after his death she was punctual in obeying his commands, but one unhappy day, being alone in a fine grotto which over-

looked the sea, she began to wonder within herself what extraordinary virtue could be lodged in so small a compass as that jewel, she having many others of a greater magnitude and lustre, concerning which her father had not given her the least charge, and was tempted to think the value he had set upon it, was owing merely to the superstition of old age; she thought at least there could be no harm in examining it, as she would not presume to break open, or any way demolish it, so took it off her breast and turned it on every side to try if she could discover any thing particular in it; but saw nothing more than what she might discern at a much greater distance, that it was a pretty large stone, environed with several others of a less size:—*Well, cried she to herself peevishly*, what can this mighty mystery be?—My father told me, it was a present from the gods; surely the gods do not deal in riddles with mankind; but if they do, I should think it rather a merit than a crime to endeavour to explain their meaning: In speaking these words, the stone in the middle dropt out, and left the socket empty; surprized, she stooped to take it up, but a little bird which had been hopping about the grotto, caught it in his bill, and immediately soared with it out of sight: In vain she screamed,—in vain she pursued the winged robber with her eyes, in hopes of seeing it fall where she might find it; she soon lost sight both of him and the prize he had deprived her of:—She then repented what she had done, though only for having disobeyed the last commands of her father; but soon she found consequences more direful than could have ever entered into her imagination. —The pure and unclouded sky grew on a sudden black and horrid, scarce



scarce any light remained but what was given by blazing sheets of elemental fire, which shot with amazing rapidity through the gloom, accompanied with claps of thunder so loud and violent, they seemed to shake the basis of the earth, and bring on a second chaos.

I HAD forgot to tell you, that in this island, no such thing had ever been known before, not even the winds had leave to blow upon it too roughly, and only gentle *Zephirs* wafted, from field to field, the various odours of an eternal spring;—how terrible then must such a phenomenon be to the unhappy *Eovaai* and her people! But this was only the beginning of misfortunes,—all that the old king had prognosticated soon after ensued.—Plagues followed plagues, war, famine, desolating pestilence, every destroying angel poured out his phial of wrath upon them:—Intestine jars bred sedition among the people, which at length broke into open rebellion; the queen was driven from her palace, all was in confusion, and this once blest, this envied spot of earth, reduced to the utmost misery and contempt.

THE various incidents of *Eovaai's* calamities take up the whole book, but I have told you in few words the allegory, which I believe you will find no difficulty in explaining.

PEOPLE that enquire too deeply into the mysteries of religion, will always find themselves bewildered;—the speculation is above the reach of human reason even in the strongest heads, and when attempted by the more weak, is sure to bring on the most fearful distraction of ideas.

Humbly to believe what we are taught in youth, and for the support of which we have internal as well as external arguments, is the surest means of enjoying peace of mind in age, and will be our best consolation in the hour of death.

IF we look into the world, either through the retrospect of history, or as present observation shews it to us, we shall find, that difference in religion, or the difference of pretences to it, have been the chief cause or excuse for a variety of crimes, as the humorous poet *Hudibras* justly says,

*Zeal's a dreadful termagant,  
That teaches saints to tear and rant;  
Turns meek and sneaking secret ones  
To raw heads fierce and bloody bones:  
And not content with endless quarrels  
Against the wicked and their morals,  
The Gibelines for want of Guelphs,  
Divert their rage upon themselves.*

THE first broachers of any new opinion find so much their account in it, that it is not to be wondered at, in an age where the fairest professions of zeal for the true deity are frequently made the cover of a secret idolatry to *Mammon*, we should find so many of deep heads and shallow pockets, endeavour to make their own advantage of the credulous and more ignorant.

CURIOSITY is, no doubt, one of the most darling propensities of human nature, and indeed ought, in some cases, to be encouraged, as it is only another word for a desire of knowledge. — Without it, all improvement in the arts and sciences

sciences would cease;—nature, which every day teems with fresh wonders for the speculative mind, in vain would spread her unexhausted stores;—the beauty and the use of her various productions lost, and we should be guilty of an ungrateful neglect to the Almighty Dispenser of those blessings.—Here is sufficient to exercise the inquisitive faculty;—here the search is equally commendable as pleasing; why then should we not be content with these subjects, without prying into things that are forbidden, and in which our utmost scrutiny serves only to plunge us into the more uncertainty.

YET I have heard many people boast of this enquiring disposition as to matters of religion. Shall I believe this or that, *say they*, because such a one, or such a one, has maintained it for a truth!—No, I will examine all, make myself acquainted with every different opinion, and then chuse, and abide by that which I find right. This would be extremely just, I grant, could any one be certain he were able, among this diversity, to chuse the right. Reason will inform him, he will tell you; alas, how weak is reason in this point? how little to be depended on, how apt to be misled, and how often are they who imagine themselves most free from prejudice, entirely governed by it? Mr. *Dryden*, in his *Religio Laici*, has some very fine lines on the imbecility of human reason.

*Dim as the borrow'd beams of moons and stars  
To lonely, weary, wand'ring travellers,  
Is reason to the soul; and as on high,  
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,*



*Not light us here, so reason's glimm'ring ray  
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,  
 But guide us upward to a better day.  
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,  
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;  
 So pale grows reason at religion's sight,  
 So dies, and so dissolves in supernat'ral light.*

CURIOSITY, as I before observed, is a praiseworthy emotion of the mind, when it signifies a thirst after knowledge, and is directed to proper objects; but when misapplied, is the most dangerous of any; we know not to what lengths it may excite us, even in things of infinitely less consequence than that of religion; but in mere points of speculative and polemic divinity, the unlearned should not indulge it, lest they be intensibly led into enthusiasm or superstition; extremes opposite to the spirit of true religion, productive of spiritual pride or abject fear, and professed enemies to a meek or chearful mind, on each of which our happiness so principally depends.

I BELIEVE it superfluous to make any apology for so long a letter, because you have often desired I would give you my sentiments freely on this occasion, and poor *Lucia's* condition reminding me of the promise I then gave of complying with your commands, I took the first opportunity of fulfilling it.—I am sensible I have left many arguments unurged which the subject might furnish, but I was apprehensive of becoming too tedious, and besides know your own good sense will easily supply whatever I have been deficient in.—I am with due respect, madam,

Your obedient servant,

ASTREA.



## EPISTLE LXXXI.

*From SOPHRONIA to a gentleman, who having received some disappointments in life, could not forbear testifying an unbecoming impatience at fortune, and the baseness of mankind.*

S I R,



HOUGH you have no friend more truly concerned for those repeated disappointments you have met with than myself, yet I must own I am much more concerned to find with how little temper you sustain them; and as I had not the opportunity last night of communicating my sentiments to you, think it the duty of friendship to lay hold on the first that offered, to use my poor endeavours, at least, to call you back to your former self, by reminding you how unworthy it is of that philosophy you profess, to suffer an unavailing passion to triumph over reason.—If you have not a sufficient stock of resignation to the Divine Will, to look upon all afflictions as permitted or directed by the same unerring wisdom from whence blessings proceed, consider them at least as unavoidable; and that impatience and repining always renders them worse, never better.—For all events either there *is*, or *is not*, a remedy; if the former, prudence demands we should attempt it; if the latter, the same prudence should teach us to think as little as possible of it.—Cross accidents are common to all men, more or less, and in well supporting them consists the dignity of a rational being.—An infant will

will be froward and peevish when any thing happens to thwart its little fancy, but maturity should inform us that we must not expect to be humoured in every thing.—I am ashamed to hear people cry out, that this or that is not to be borne, when we all know that what heaven decrees, without whose will nothing comes to pass, must be borne; and all our murmuring at our fate serves only to render it more grievous, as a slave in struggling with his chains, adds pain to imprisonment.

WILL example influence, let any one who labours under any disappointment, turn their eyes upon *Learchus*:—*Learchus* in his infancy, basely defrauded of an ample patrimony, and when riper years put him in a condition to attempt the recovery of his rights, deceived and betrayed by those he most confided in for redress:—The darling object of his most early wishes, the beautiful *Cleora*, torn from his hopes and given to another:—Every expectation frustrated, —every aim impeded. The butt, at which adverse fortune seems to have darted her whole quiver of envenomed arrows; yet with how equal, how serene a mind, does he support them all? How does his fortitude rise superior to every ill, above uttering either reproaches or complaints?

LET me conjure you, sir, to imitate a virtue you have so often praised, and which is so justly revered by all good men.—Religion, philosophy, and even self-love, unite to bid us exert all the nobler, and more discreet emotions of the soul, to guard against the equally prophane, and mean alarms of passion and discontent.



I KNOW you have not had the best success in your most laudable attempts; I know you have much wherewith to accuse the injustice of mankind: But consider we live not in an age where either virtue or good sense has any plea for favour or protection.—Were you to pursue contrary methods to those you have made choice of, you would doubtless have more success; but that I hope, nay, dare answer for, you will never do. If therefore you have been ill treated by the world, let it be your comfort that you have not deserved it. Your heart bears witness that the prospect of private advantage could not tempt you to join with your principal oppressor in his schemes of oppressing others. You have perhaps lost all hopes of favour from him by your refusal; but go on; be bold in asserting the cause of honour and virtue; and if your adversaries have not wisdom enough at present to see their crime, they will one day feel it in the severest manner.—The generality of mankind only know you have been unhappy in your pursuits, but are entirely ignorant that you are so, merely because you have too much honesty to conceive, much less to join in any scheme for aggrandizing a few, to the prejudice of the whole.—Pity, therefore, rather than be angry at the folly of the misguided multitude, who go with the current, which way soever it carries them; be satisfied with living an inactive life, since those you wish to serve, chuse not to be served by you, but rather take part with your, and their own enemies, in barring you from all the means of rendering your virtues or your abilities conspicuous.

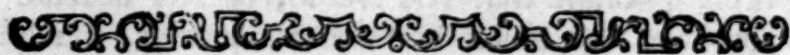
BUT you seem not to lay the stress of your disquiet so much on your having lost a seat in  
par-

parliament, or that of your cause in *Westminster-Hall*, though deprived of so considerable a part of your estate by it, or on the disappointment of that post of honour you have so long solicited, and been made to expect, as on the time you have wasted in these pursuits, and the triumphs your ill success affords to your enemies.—Alas! Sir, the two latter are but the consequences of the former, and a moment's cool reflection will tell you, that you ought rather to make the best use you can of future time, than regret the past; and that if your enemies rejoice in those misfortunes which were unavoidable, they will have yet more cause to do so, when they find you bring others on yourself by giving way to fruitless discontent.

PARDON the freedom of these remonstrances, as they flow from a heart full with good wishes for your welfare.—I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

SOPHRONIA.



## EPISTLE LXXXII.

*From MIRANDA at Windsor, to PANTHEA at Paris, expressing her uneasiness at not having heard from her, and earnestly entreating her to write.*

*My dear PANTHEA,*

 I HAVE just now found out that human nature is extremely partial and selfish, if not greatly corrected by reason.—I have sadly lamented not having heard from you in three successive posts, and

and to my shame must own, that at first I wished rather to attribute your silence to any thing than want of friendship; but when I reflected more deliberately, I retracted the narrow and interested ambition, and blushed to think of how little consequence my peace of mind was in competition with a thousand accidents, which might happen to yourself, and oblige you to forget a person, no otherwise worthy the favours you have honoured me with, than by the sincere and grateful sense I have of them.

ONE line assuring me you are in health, and that nothing has fallen out of ill to you, will now make me perfectly easy:—You see how humble I am grown,—a month ago I should have complained to have seen your name subscribed at the bottom of a *folio* sheet, now even the quarter part of a *duodecimo* would content me,—see what it is to be starved.—I rioted in the plenitude of your wit and good-nature, but being so long deprived of any part will make me thankful for the smallest crumbs which fall from that abundance you pour forth to others.

I FLATTER myself, however, you will not take me at my word, and that when you do write, your letter will be copious enough to make atonement for all past omissions, which as I have calculated cannot be less than three whole sheets of the largest imperial paper *Paris* can supply you with.

I HAVE no news to acquaint you with, but that we are like to have so bad a neighbour, that I shall be obliged to leave *Windsor*.

I AM



I AM sinking into my own selfish views again ;  
 —but though I know it highly unreasonable to  
 desire you should devote so much of your time in  
 a place where you might employ it in much  
 more agreeable amusements, yet I know you  
 well enough to know nothing is so pleasing to  
 yourself as to please others, and in that confi-  
 dence depend on my request being granted, since  
 I am certain you also know that the continual  
 assurances of your friendship make the greatest  
 happiness of, my dear *Panthea*,

Yours, &c.

MIRANDA.

*End of the SEVENTH BOOK.*



EPISTLES.



# EPISTLES.

---

## BOOK VIII.

---

### EPISTLE LXXXIII.

*From MIRANDA to PANTHEA, wrote the same day with the foregoing, on account of having, after her sending it to the post, received two letters from her, which had lain at the office in Calais, by reason of the mail being detained.*

*My dear PANTHEA,*



YOU will receive from me both an accusation and recantation at the same time; the former, I but thought, I had reason; to make the latter, I am sure I have.—I did not, alas! consider the ocean was between us, nor that the quarrels of princes interfered with our friendship, and might possibly prevent my receiving the assurances of it so soon as I expected.—I had just sent mine to the post when yours was brought me, and by their dates perceived the error I was in.—I could not bear you should see the rash judgment I had passed, without, at the same time, seeing I was convinced, and ashamed of it:—But I shall leave my transgression to be excused by the motive, if, as the poet says,

*The*

*The faults of love, by love are justify'd;*

So will those of friendship also be, where it is mutual; I shall therefore rest satisfied till your next takes away all room for doubt.

I THANK you for the agreeable account you give me: The story is very entertaining, but you have the happy talent of rendering every thing so you treat upon.—I have no time to expatiate on the beauties of it, nor indeed to consider them as I ought: I fear being too late for the post, and can only tell you that I am, with the most unfeigned regard, my dear *Panthea*,

Yours, &c.

MIRANDA.



### EPISTLE LXXXIV.

*From SOPHRONIA to MARCIA, who being disappointed of seeing her so soon as she expected, had desired she would send her daughter.*

Dear MARCIA,

T is a sad thing to have out-lived ones credit.—My last gave you all the assurances that words could form, of my being with you as soon as the unfortunate business I have at present on my hands shall be dispatched;—yet that was not sufficient,—you require me to send my daughter, and tell me you shall then be certain of my coming to conduct her home; which is only a genteel manner of letting me know my word is not to be relied on without security. Indeed, I think, I ought



ought to remember I am descended from the ancient *Britons*, and resent, in the manner my ancestors would have done, the not being believed without an hostage. — But times are changed, and the fashions of mind alter as well as those of dress. — I find I have not courage to refuse you any thing. — Whatever you enjoin must be granted: — The pledge you demand sets out to-morrow in the stage-coach. — She will have the honour to deliver you this mark of my submission, also the purchase of tea you desired I would make for you, and the snuff-box you left behind in *London*.

As for any fresh intelligence I have none, except one thing I am sure you will be sorry to hear. — Mr. \*\*\*\* has resigned his office, and this event at present engrosses the conversation of the town; various censures are passed on it, some applaud, and others blame his resolution; those who do the latter, tho' they cannot help saying with *Acasto* in the play,

———— in corrupted times,

*The post of honour is a private station;*

Yet they alledge, that a person so eminent for his wisdom, integrity, and every other virtue and great qualification, should not have withdrawn himself from public affairs, when there was so much occasion for his presence as a check to the licentious designs of bold and venal men in office,

OTHERS again will tell you, that he has acted a truly wise and noble part; that it would have been inconsistent with his character to have continued

tinued any longer a member of that body with whom he could not join, and whose councils being governed by majority, it would be vain for him to oppose; and where possibly some things hereafter might be done, in which, tho' innocent, he must bear part of the blame when canvassed by posterity.

ALL, however, agree, all I mean who have no share in the corruption of the times, that things must be very desparate indeed, when such a man chuses to quit the scene of action he has always lived in, and bury those great talents in obscurity, which he finds of no weight to stem the tide of over-bearing vice.

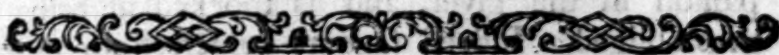
FOR my own part, I cannot help thinking that this action must open the eyes of all who are not wilfully blind to the real situation of our public affairs, and enable them to examine into the conduct of the managers with more care than they have done for some years past, as well as shew them how dangerous it is, to take things upon the credit of an artful harrangue, or a well penned pamphlet.

BUT no more on this subject till we meet, which I flatter myself will be something sooner than was proposed when I wrote last to you.—My lawyer has just now assured me, my business will be decided the first week in term, and if so, farewell for a time to this noisy, busy, bustling, foolish town.—I shall leave the fire-works to those who like the glare, and fly to my dear *Marcia*, in whose society, amidst the blooming sweets the approaching season promises, I doubt not to enjoy more solid happiness, than all the  
gaudy

gaudy expensive rejoycings for the *peace* can afford those who are most eager to partake of them. — Till when believe me, with the most perfect amity, my dear *Marcia*,

Yours, &c.

SOPHRONIA.



### EPISTLE LXXXV.

*From MIRA to her niece, on the manner in which she ought to confer favours.*

*My dear niece,*



WAS transported with joy at the account *Matilda* gave me of your generous benefaction to the worthy and unfortunate Mrs. \*\*\*, but my satisfaction had yet been more compleat, had I received it from any other mouth than that of one who had it from yourself. — The bounties we bestow do honour to ourselves, and therefore should never be reported by ourselves. — Nay, it behoves us to silence, as much as is in our power, the gratitude of the receiver, for which reason I should chuse to convey my donations by an unknown hand, especially if the object of my compassion had been born and bred in a situation superior to obligations of that nature. — It requires the utmost caution and delicacy of behaviour, when we appear in such a case, to avoid giving greater pain than pleasure to the person we should serve. — An ungracious manner of conferring a favour destroys great part of it's merit, and mingles a certain gall, which poisons all the



the comforts it is intended to bestow. An ungracious manner in offering relief to an unhappy person of tolerable education, sinks him in his own opinion and makes him suspect that he is contemptible in the eyes of his benefactor; though necessity tempts him to accept the gift, yet he is sensible that there was not true compassion in the giver, and is shocked at being thus obliged. Indeed favours conferred in this manner, seem to flow rather from ostentation than charity. This is, my dear, a meanness of spirit which I am so far from suspecting in you, that I know you utterly incapable of it: I am certain you endeavoured to dissipate the confusion she must necessarily be involved in, by expressions altogether obliging and polite; and that your very looks, as well as words, were so turned, as to convince her that you were doing yourself the greatest pleasure:—All this I make not the least doubt of, yet am a little concerned for your sake, that you mentioned any thing of the affair to *Matilda*.—She told it me;—she may tell it to others also,—they may repeat it till it comes round to Mrs. \*\*\* herself, and then how greatly will the value of the obligation you have conferred, be diminished.—This, indeed, may not happen, and I hope it will not: but in things of this kind, where the peace of mind in a person whom we wish well is liable to be affected, we should leave nothing to chance: We are sure of the secret while in our own bosoms, but cannot be so when intrusted to another; I therefore take the liberty which friendship, consanguinity, and the experience of more years entitles me to, of reminding you, that true generosity requires we should be so far from taking any notice of the favours we confer,  
that

that we ought to lose the memory of them ourselves. There is nothing more common, than to hear people inveigh against the ingratitude of those they have some way or other obliged; but if we examine into the motives which induced them to do the good offices they so much boast of, perhaps we should not find they had so much reason to complain.—There are many instances in which the *donor* deserves little thanks from the *receiver*, but I shall take notice of only two,—the one where we expect an implicit and eternal submission in requital for the favours bestowed, and look on the person we have obliged as slaves purchased with our money;—the other, where what is done, is done merely with the view of magnifying ourselves in the eyes of the world. I never hear accusations of this nature, without being put in mind of that genteel, but severe reprimand, *Henry IV. of France* gave to one of his generals, who had spoke too largely of the services he had rendered him, which was this,

*Vous saluez mes etat, j' aime a le publier :  
Mais quand je m'en souviens, vous devez l'oblir.*

I FIND, my dear, whoever has any other prospect in the bestowing a favour, than that of serving the person on whom it is bestowed, does no favour at all, that demands much gratitude from the receiver.—The act ought to be pure and simple, unmixed with any considerations of self-gratification, farther than that of the pleasure which flows in a generous soul on having the power of being serviceable to our fellow-creatures.

THAT you may always be blest with that  
VOL. II. D power

power and inclination, is the wish and hope of,  
my dear niece,

Your truly affectionate aunt,

MIRA.



### EPISTLE LXXXVI.

*From BELLIZA to ARAMINTA, severely reprov-  
ing her for encouraging the addresses of a gentle-  
man whom she loved, but who was every way an  
improper match for her, and must infallibly be  
ruined if he persisted in his present intreaties.*

*My once much-valued ARAMINTA,*



AM extremely sorry my long absence from town has kept from me an affair which, had I known earlier, I flatter myself the advice I am now about to give, might have had more weight.—Yes, *Araminta*, it is with an equal share of surprize and grief, I hear of the tender intercourse carried on between you and *Miramont*; that he should declare a passion for you, and that you should encourage that passion, are things so little expected from either of you, that without being convinced by the most undeniable proofs, would never have gained credit with me.—Good heaven! Is it by yielding to the soft impulse of an inconsiderate love, that he hopes to retrieve the misfortunes of his family? And is this the effect of that generous pity I have heard you testify for the injuries he sustains, to put it out of his power ever to surmount them? O *Araminta*, *Araminta*, I am shocked, I am confounded at such a falling-off from  
from



from reason in two persons, of whose capacities I had the highest idea ;—yet, if not too late, let me conjure you by all the testimonies you have received of my unfeigned regard, to consider what you are about,—withdraw in time from the precipice, nor plunge yourself and him you pretend to love, into an abyss of ruin, from which, when once sunk, neither of you must hope to rise again.

BUT you, it seems, pretend, that though both fired with an equal degree of passion, he neither presses nor would you consent that the ceremony of marriage should be compleated till his affairs were settled, and he is in possession of his estate: How romantic, how ridiculous is this ! Can either he or you imagine those wretches who took the advantage of some small incumbrances he was left involved in, to strip him in his infancy of that vast patrimony, which is his due still, will refund their unjust acquisition, and in meer compassion to your mutual love, give back his rights ? Do they not rather rejoice, that by this fatal flame he is deprived of the only means of doing himself justice, that of marrying into a family whose wealth and interest might enable him to call them to an account for what they have done ?

I WONDER not at your loving the accomplish'd *Miramont*, he doubtless is such as might justify the most warm affection ; nor do I think it strange he should find enough in you to excite the extremest tenderness in his youthful heart ; but reason, and a due consideration of that indissoluble bar fortune has thrown between you, ought to have checked in both the soft emotion.

—*Victoria* languishes to throw her immense fortune at his feet, her father would gladly use all his influence and power to obtain restitution for the injured youth, if he were once become his son: The fair, the virtuous, the high-born *Amelia*, sighs to find the overtures made to him, by her brother, on her score, have had so little effect:—Either of these ladies, you are sensible, might render him in a condition to cope with his bitter adversaries, and can you take the advantage partial fancy gives you over them in his esteem? Say, you love, can you wish him to forego all the glorious prospects such alliances afford him?—Does the vanity of triumphing over your fair and opulent rivals prevail above the generous sense you ought to have of his injuries and misfortunes; nay, of the unhappy tenderness he has for you,

CAN any one look on it as a proof of true affection, that you chuse rather to see him linger out a life useless to his country, and inglorious to himself, in a vain adoration of your charms, than to have him shine in the honours to which he is born with any other woman?—A truly noble person consults the interest of the beloved object; and were you such, you would endeavour to render yourself less amiable than you are, instead of heightening, as I am told you do, by art, the graces you have received from nature:—You would fly his presence, not court his visits; you would do every thing in your power to damp so pernicious a flame, not add fuel to it, by repeated declarations of seducing love.

I AM very sensible how ill you will relish my  
speaking

speaking in so free a manner, but I am no less excited to do so by my friendship for you, than by that respect which is owing to the great merits of *Miramont*; and the impatience every honest heart must feel at the cruel usage he has sustained:—You may, to my knowledge, marry with a person of your own condition, and make a figure in the world suitable to your birth and fortune; whereas, by encouraging the address of a person, so much your superior by birth, yet determining not to solemnize the nuptials till he recovers his estate, and can support the grandeur of an illustrious family, which your alliance will rather prevent than further, this renders both yourself and him the sport of fortune, and a theme of ridicule to all who know it.

THE romantic delusion with which you both are at present so powerfully possessed, doubtless tells you, it is heroic to suffer every thing for each other's sake, and condemn yourselves to an eternal celibacy, rather than attempt to break the chains which love has cast about your hearts; but, *Araminta*, a few years hence, when decaying passion on the one side, and faded beauty on the other, make it too late to retrieve the time you have lost, will certainly convince both of the unhappy infatuation, and each will equally reproach the cause of their undoing.—*Miramont* indeed, will have the most reason to do so, when he reflects, that by an ill-judged passion he has lost the esteem of all his friends, all hopes of assistance, or even compassion from the world; and being the last of a most noble family, must die unblest with heirs, and leave his enemies in an undisturbed possession of an estate, to which they have no right.



INDEED, I am so angry at your behaviour, that I give myself no pain how much you may be disconcerted at these remonstrances; the more stinging they are, the more they are likely to produce the effect I wish:—I should rejoice that any thing I say should carry conviction with it, and be of force to bring you back to that good sense you once were mistress of, that I may, without forfeiting my own, continue to subscribe myself, your dear friend,

BELLIZA.



### EPISTLE LXXXVII.

*From HILLARIA to CLIO, on the doctrine of PYTHAGORAS, and the fondness some people shew to animals, while those of their own species are neglected.*

**I** AM always persecuting my dear *Clio*, for the solution of some impertinent doubt or other hatched in my own prolific noddle:—I heartily wish you had more vanity than you have; for then I should be sure you would pardon the trouble for the sake of the compliment to your understanding; but as that is not the case, I must depend entirely on your good nature:—You must know, I have been puzzling my brain all last night, about the tenets of *Pythagoras*, and cannot help thinking, that, as much as his philosophy seems to be exploded, there are a great many of all degrees of people who really believe them: To what other reason can be assigned the immoderate fondness we frequently see shewn to several kinds of animals,

mals, than to a belief in those who treat them with it, that when once the being they now wear shall be shaken off, they shall immediately be transmigrated into some one or other of those creatures?—Would the inconstant *Belinda* be so constant in her friendship to her little lap-dog *Veni*, if she did not think whenever she ceases to flaunt it in the mall upon two legs, she shall, like him, run by the hoop of some new belle upon four?—Would *Comus* see, without concern, thousands of the species he now is of, perish miserably, yet take so much care his favourite bear should want for nothing, if he had not a notion of being one day a bear himself?—Would *Clara* keep servants and a table for the entertainment of distressed cats, yet turn the needy of her kind from her door, unpitied, unrelieved, if she did not believe her sojourn would hereafter be among the mewling race?—Would *Atamadoule* caress her monkey with so much tenderness, and imitate all the little tricks she sees him play, but because she would be perfect in the part she expects fate will oblige her to act in good earnest, some few years hence?

IN fine, I see people take a fancy to one kind or other of the brute creation, and are at greater pains to humour them, than they can bring themselves to be at, for any thing that is human. Does not this look, *Clio*, as if they were degenerating by degrees into dispositions suitable to the rank they shall one day hold?

CHRISTIAN philosophy, you know, gives us hope, that it is in our power to become angels hereafter, or, at least, such glorified creatures, as to be fit society for those celestial be-

ings ; why then do we not endeavour to be as like them as we can, while on earth, in order to prepare ourselves for a change so flattering to ambition?—Nothing methinks is more strange, than that so few should make any attempt towards attaining the necessary qualifications for making a good figure in the regions of immortal bliss, and yet all pretend they hope to be admitted there.—Can a person, whose pleasure is in the company of a dog, a monkey, a parrot, a cat, a horse, or any other species of the brute creation, be imagined to have taste for the conversation of cherubs, seraphs, and the rest of the angelic throng, which are all purity, and much more refined above the most delicate of the human race, than we are above the lowest reptile that crawls beneath our feet ?

DOES not this inverted taste, this disposition towards brutality, look as if they subscribed to what the witty Earl of *Rochester* wrote, when, being in a fullen humour with the world, he declares,

*Were I (who to my cost already am  
One of those strange prodigious creatures man)  
A spirit free to chuse, for my own share,  
What case of flesh and blood I'd please to wear, }  
I'd be a dog, a monkey, or a bear ;  
Or any thing, but that vain animal,  
Who is so proud of being rational.*

How are sentiments of this kind consistent with that ambition, which, they say, is inherent to all human nature ?—An ambition of being exalted, thro' successive periods of eternity, from lower to higher degrees of intelligence,  
till

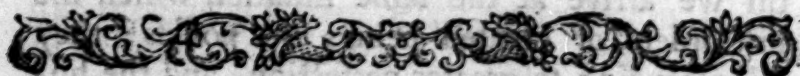


till we arrive at the same situation which the first orders of created beings *now* possess; they still ascending to greater perfection, and the human soul following their steps. These are the hopes peculiar to christianity; and shall christians descend into an abject superstition, and meanly become the disciples of *Pythagoras*? Shame! shame!—Yet, I do assure you, I have heard some who are called christians very seriously defend his doctrine.

SET me right in this matter, if you can, I beseech you; at least favour me so far, as to give me your opinion, what degree of spirit those people must have, who can content themselves with the belief of existing hereafter, in the shape and station of creatures so infinitely inferior to that which they enjoy at present.—For my part, I should be, beyond all expression, wretched in the apprehension of losing the little *reason* I am mistress of, and degenerating into meer *instinct*:—I know of no idea so shocking, and therefore banish it from my thoughts.—I hope, while in this world, I never shall be deprived of the power of testifying by actions befitting the human species, that I am, my dear *Clio*, yours sincerely,

HILLARIA.

P. S. Do not imagine, that in what I have said concerning the fondness some people have for the brute creation, I mean to affront *Tib*, your little favourite squirrel:—I would have a proper care taken of all harmless animals whenever they fall under our protection, and am very well convinced you are far from putting the little forrester in any degree of competition, even with the meanest servant that feeds or cleans him.



## EPISTLE LXXXVIII.

[In answer to the foregoing.]

From CLIO to HILLARIA, giving her opinion of the true cause of the folly she complains of.

My dear HILLARIA,

I AM not at all surprized to find you think it so great a difficulty to reconcile with reason, that immoderate fondness some people have for animals; but I must tell you, I think you do this folly of the age too much honour, to ascribe it to principle, or opinion of any sort:—It certainly does not proceed from a wrong way of thinking, but from not thinking at all; and as much as I condemn the precepts of *Pythagoras*, in the point you mention, I condemn, yet more, those who regulate themselves by no precept whatever.—The true source of all the follies, and indeed of all the miseries too, of the present age, arises from a want of thought:—There is an unhappy void in the minds of a great many people:—All they do, whether good or ill, is without design, or premeditation, and meerly as chance directs:—When you see *Belinda* hug her lap-dog, it is not because she loves him, but because she has nothing else at that time to do, and is too volatile to be a moment unactive:—It is the same thing with *Comus*, he will one day cherish his bear, the next make the poor monster be beat unmercifully, just as he takes it into his head, and without being either pleased or angry:—Examine the greatest part of the companies you go into,

into, you will find that almost every thing they say and do is instantaneous, and actuated by a sudden emotion for which themselves can give no manner of account, have never thought upon before, and perhaps never reflect upon afterwards. In fine, my dear, most people, especially those who are called the *beau monde*, seem to me to be guided only by something yet less sagacious, and more mean than that very *instinct* you so much dread to be reduced to.

As to the transmigration of human souls into the brute creation, I think you need be under no manner of pain, nor can I believe there are any, who in their hearts entertain the least opinion of that doctrine, though I am sensible some, who take a delight in appearing particular, affect to defend it.

I WAS not long since in company, where this subject happening to be mentioned, a grave old gentleman took upon him to maintain, that nothing could be more consistent with reason:—*There is*, said he, *a perpetual renovation in every thing that breathes, not only as nature takes delight in variety, but as it is agreeable also to divine justice, to transmute the human mind into such forms as it most resembled, while in its pristine form.* Among other things, he told us, that the phoenix of *Arabia* contained the soul of *Adam*, in order to punish his too great complaisance for *Eve*, by condemning him to live in an eternal celibacy. —I could perceive the inclination every one that heard him had to make some reply or other to this position, but he delivered it with so authoritative an air, that no one durst open their lips in contradiction.



LET you and I, my dear *Hillaria*, not perplex ourselves with these fancies:—Let us have the laudable ambition of ascending to a species infinitely above what we at present are, instead of imagining we shall descend into any of those so much beneath us:—Supposing even the system were true, that the old gentleman I just mentioned would have us believe, and that we should indeed be rendered hereafter what we most resemble while here, it is surely our business to attain to as near a similitude as our frail natures will permit, of the most refined and glorified works of the creator.—If we strictly adhere to the principles of *christianity*, and depend on the assurances given us in holy writ, the rotation we shall know when leaving this life, will be much more for the better, than our *Pythagoreans* pretend will be for the worse.—Let the cruel and blood-thirsty man tremble at his future existence in a wolf, the base betrayer into a mole, the libidinous into a goat or swine, the envious into a cat, and all who delight in deeds of darkness, into bats or shriek-owls, but let the lovers of mercy and benevolence, the pure and incorrupt of heart, expect to be cloathed with the rays of celestial beauty, and never fading charms.—I am, my dear *Hillaria*,

Yours unfeignedly,

CLIO

*P. S.* *Tib* is much obliged to you for the apology you make in his favour, and if he could speak, would doubtless thank you for it:—I am, however, bound to make you my acknowledgments for not believing the pleasure I sometimes take in him, will bring me in any danger of being one day transmigrated into a squirrel.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE LXXXIX.

*From APAMIA to EUPHROSINE in the country,  
on the pretended conjurer that was expected to shew  
wonders at the theatre in the Hay-market.*

Dear EUPHROSINE,



HERE are some sorts of misfortunes which it is not in our power to pity, how much soever they may be regretted by the person who labours under them. — My last gave you an account of a ridiculous, and indeed impious entertainment, proposed to be exhibited at the little theatre in the *Hay-market*, where a fellow pretended not only to convey his whole real body (without equivocation) into a quart-bottle, in the view of the spectators, but also to raise, from their eternal homes, the spirits of deceased persons, and oblige them to hold discourse with as many as were desirous of such conversation; but I little imagined when I wrote concerning this impudent proposition, that any one could be *weak* enough to believe such things were practicable, or *wicked* enough to wish to be spectators of them if they were so; but, to my great surprize and concern, I was informed, by one who happened to pass that way, that the throng of chairs and coaches about the doors, were greater than ever had been seen before at that obscure house. No conjurer, however, appeared, and this numerous and polite audience, after waiting a long time, thought best to retire, which they might have done in good order, had not a certain very *great* person, who

who had come to town for no other purpose, as it proved, than to be disarmed, been so much incensed at the disappointment, that he resolved revenge on the poor scenes, and without any consideration of the fright he might give the ladies, ordered the doors to be opened to the mob, who broke in like a torrent, driving all before them, plucking up benches, boxes, and orchestra, in their way to the stage, which, with their heroic leader at their head, they soon demolished: In this confusion, it is easy to conceive what the apparel of the women must suffer:—Some came home without their tippets, aprons, capuchins, head-dresses, and fans, and few, I am informed, were so lucky as to preserve their watches: Small matter, I think, of commiseration, since they knew the value of time so little as to lavish it in the manner they intended!—*Lassalia* is dying with the vapours, for being deprived of the pleasure she expected of knowing in what manner they diverted themselves in the invisible world:—*Belinda* keeps her bed, and has been twice blooded for the bruises she received in bustling through the crowd:—A certain nobleman, remarkable for nothing so much as holding up his chin, is in danger of losing part of it by a fall from the box into the pit:—The crazy bones of another are so dislocated, that it is to be feared his surgeons will lose credit in endeavouring to put them in order:—Numberless were the disasters of that ill-starred night, and most pitiful are the complaints one every where hears on the occasion; but indeed I have not a sufficient stock of good-nature to afford them either public condolence, or private compassion; on the contrary, I am as much troubled as a person of my gay temper can be, to find such an  
exube-



exuberance of folly and prophaneness, for I can give no better epithets to so unwarrantable a curiosity among people whose rank and education one would think should inspire them with better notions.

BUT you are doubtless impatient to know how all this came about, and by whom the town were so egregiously imposed upon; and I wish it were in my power to inform you with any certainty. Whoever the person is, who hired the playhouse for this end, advertised his pretended performance in all the papers, and was at all the subsequent expences of such an undertaking, he has taken care to screen himself so effectually behind the curtain, as not to be discovered:— This we may be sure of, that it was done with the sole view of exposing the stupidity of the present age, which rather than want some new matter of amusement, would run even to the devil in search of it.

THIS story has been in all the public newspapers, and will doubtless afford matter of raillery for all the courts of *Europe*, and serve to heighten the idea they have long had of our manners and morality:— But I forget I am writing to one whose zeal for the honour of her country must render this fresh subject of ridicule very unpleasant:— I heartily wish I could present you with some instance of public virtue or wisdom to counterbalance it, but that is not in my power at present, and I have no one thing to tell you, which I can flatter myself will not be disagreeable, except that I am, and ever shall be, with the utmost sincerity, yours, &c.

APAMIA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE XC.

*From HONORIA to BELLIZA, on having received a congratulatory letter from her, on account of a large addition to her fortune by the death of a gentleman who had courted her.*

*Dear madam,*



**I** HAVE received too many proofs of the friendship with which you favour me, to be at all surprized to find you among the number of those who congratulate me on so large an addition to my fortune, as has lately devolved on me through the generosity and death of the too faithful *Constantius*:—Imaginary blessing!—Gilded wretchedness!—Little, alas! does the world know, how dear I pay for this accession:—There is somewhat of uncommon perverseness in my fate:—All that would make the felicity of others, serves only to render me unhappy:—You know, madam, that from my very early years, I had all the tenderness my soul is capable of feeling for *Philetus*:—You know also how well the charming youth deserves that affection; but neither of us being blest with a sufficiency of the goods of fortune, I refused to make him partner of a state I thought unequal to his merits.—*Constantius*, who had a vast estate, loved me, as the event has proved, but too well:—But my heart being long before disposed of, I could not think of giving my person elsewhere:—I need not tell you how much I was embarrassed with the persecutions of my

my friends, who were continually ringing in my ears, that as there was no possibility of living with *Philetas* in a fashion answerable to either of our births, that I ought in justice to myself to accept of the offer of his rival, whose possession would infinitely more than make up for the deficiencies of mine:—Often have you seen me in tears on this account, and been witness of the more terrible alarms I have sustained through the jealousies of *Philetas*, who though never encouraged to hope I would be his, could not support the apprehensions that I might one day be another's. The tender sincerity of his love was thus mixed with a despair, which sometimes gave me reason to tremble for the consequences. *Constantius* heard not of this unfortunate and mutual passion till very lately:—He told me of it, but as of a thing to which he gave no credit, till my own confession convinced him of the truth:—I had indeed no motive which could induce me to deceive him, as I imagined not the effect my sincerity in this point soon after produced, nor had I any thing to fear from his reproaches, having from the first moment he declared his intentions, said every thing in my power, except revealing the secret he now had wrested from me, to assure him that my heart was far from agreeing to them.—He bore the confirmation, however, with more fortitude and patience than I expected from a lover, who had always expressed his passion in the warmest, and, as I used to think, romantic terms.—He offered not the least interruption the whole time I was speaking, nor when I had left off, made any reply for several minutes, but seemed in a profound reverie;—at last, coming out of it,—*Well, madam*, said he, *I have nothing wherewith to accuse either*



either you, or my more happy rival; and should be unworthy of the honour I pretend to of adoring you, if my continuing my unavailing addressees, gave any disturbance to your peace.—I take therefore my everlasting leave, and sincerely wish that whatever impediment at present debars you from the gratification of your wishes, may be soon removed.—He waited not to hear what return I would make to these words, but concluding them with a low bow, went hastily out of the room, leaving me in a good deal of consternation at his behaviour. I had never any great share of vanity in my composition, and could not imagine it had its source from the motive I afterwards found it had, an excess of love and respect; but rather suspected it proceeded from the want of both, and that having in his mind repented of the offers he had made me, was well enough pleased with this opportunity of breaking off.—O had it been thus, what a world of anxiety and endless grief had I escaped!—But not to keep you in suspense, a fever, with which he was immediately seized, gave a fatal testimony of the violence he had done himself in this dissembled calmness and resignation.—He languished under this distemper but four days, on the last of which his valet brought me a letter from him, with a copy of his testament so much in my favour.—I cannot express to you, madam, the strange emotions with which I was agitated at this unexpected, unexampled, undeserved generosity:—I hated myself for not being able to love a man of such exalted worth:—Nay, I almost hated *Philetas*, as the cause of my ingratitude:—I more than once resolved to go to the house of this martyr to the most pure and disinterested passion that ever was, to conjure him to live if possible, and  
to

to live for me, — to promise all he could desire or ask, and to abjure the so much doated on *Philetas* for ever. — But as often as I was about to put this thought in execution, still my fond foolish heart with-held me, and deprived me of the power of moving: — I found, alas! I had not strength enough of mind to imitate *Constantius*. — Gratitude and reason yielded to a partial tenderness, and, in spite of both, his rival triumphed! — While I was debating within myself, a messenger brought me intelligence that he expired soon after he had finished his letter, having forced himself to write it in the agonies of death: — The certainty that all I could do to save him would now come too late, plunged me into a grief which I know not if it could have been exceeded, had I seen *Philetas* breathe his last. — But there is no making you sensible how very justifiable this affection was, without letting you see the value of the person whose loss occasioned it: I have therefore sent you a copy of what he wrote, which, much more than the legacy so much talked of, will shew you what he was. — I doubt not but when you have read it, you will own I have cause for everlasting sorrow and remorse, and that I ought to do no less than devote the whole remainder of my days to the memory of one to whom I have so fatally been dear. — I do not pretend that I can ever love *Philetas* less than I have done, but I can, — I will, whatever I endure, sacrifice that love to the manes of his unhappy rival, — forego all the softer wishes of my soul, and live a widowed-virgin for his sake. — This, dear madam, is the resolution I have taken, and not all the pangs I feel at the sight of the distraction and despair it gives *Philetas*, are able to make me recede from it: — Pity the situation

tion of your unhappy friend, and confess that there is something peculiar and mysteriously cruel in my destiny.—To be beloved by two such men as *Philetas* and *Constantius*, comes not to every woman's share: It is a glory many of my sex will envy me, and yet, how miserable has it made me!—I could not reward the passion of *Constantius*, because I loved *Philetas*; nor can I gratify the wishes of *Philetas*, without injustice to the memory of *Constantius*:—The *living* and *dead* divide my soul between them; love, esteem, gratitude and compassion join to rend my heart with a vicissitude of anguish; yet is it equally impossible for me, according to my way of thinking, to ease the disquiet of him who lives, as it is to restore life to him who sleeps within his tomb.—Both are irrecoverably lost to me, and I to peace:—But I detain you too long from the enclosed:—The perusal of that will abundantly justify the grief I feel, and the determination I have made, and be at the same time an excuse for these incoherent lines from,

Dear madam,

Your affectionate humble servant,

HONORIA.



EPISTLE





## EPISTLE XCI.

[ Enclosed in the foregoing. ]

*From CONSTANTIUS to HONORIA, with the copy of his last will, and assuring her that he dies without regret, as he shall leave her happy.*

*Most dear, and (even in death) sole object of my worldly Cares.*

AD the passion you have inspired me  
 H with been tainted by any selfish views,  
 I could not have heard you avow  
 your affection for another, without  
 resentment against the happy rival; and perhaps  
 have had the arrogance to have accused you of  
 partiality and ingratitude:—This, I say, how  
 unjust soever, is the way of ordinary lovers, but  
 my wishes had an aim more refined and more  
 suitable to their object:—All my felicity was  
 placed in the hopes of encreasing yours, and when  
 I found that glorious ambition frustrated, I from  
 that moment resolved to leave the fond pursuit  
 to him who alone had the power of accomplish-  
 ing it.—Ardently as I languished for the posses-  
 sion of your lovely person, I should have thought  
 the blessing too dearly purchased, if at the ex-  
 pence of your peace of mind.

BUT, madam, I soon found that to lose you,  
 and keep life, were things incompatible:—The  
 instant I came from your apartment I was seized  
 with agonies which convinced me it was time to  
 settle

settle my affairs in this world, and make such preparation for another as my disorders would permit:—As your happiness was still the reigning purport of my soul, I immediately ordered my testament to be drawn up, by which you will find I have constituted you my sole executrix, and bequeathed you all my *personal* estate, as well as made you heiress of all that part of my *real* one, which is not entailed upon the family:—The original I have put into the hands of Mr. \* \* \* \*, my lawyer, who I believe is an honest man; I enclose you however an exact copy, to prevent all possibility of an imposition.—I felt so much ease after having done this, that I began to think I should recover:—Yet had it been so, you should not by my life have been deprived of what my death designed you:—I resolved rather to retire to some distant corner of the world, and reserving to myself only a small pension to supply the necessities of nature, pass the days allotted me in prayer and meditation; but heaven has decreed it otherwise, perhaps to save your generous soul the pain of thinking you were indebted for any obligation to one you could not love. I soon perceived my fever had but afforded a short intermission to return with greater violence upon me:—It now has got the better of my vital spirits, and I find I am going, I hope to that land where all is love and ever-during bliss; yet be assured, amidst the extasies of immortal pleasure, *Honoria* will be remembered, and it will add even to the joys of heaven, to think I have contributed to her happiness on earth.—O, may it be sincere and permanent; may the fortunate *Philetas*, my rival now no more, for a long series of revolving time, share all those transports my fond heart once aimed at,  
till

till both grown old in bliss, you soar together to the realms of glory:—Till then, O *Honoriam*! a long farewell.

CONSTANTIUS.

P. S. I cannot close this without desiring that the only tribute you will pay to the memory of my love, may be the speedy consummation of your nuptials with the happy *Philetes*, who, I am assured, by all that know him, has merits to justify your choice:—Once more adieu.



## EPISTLE XCII.

From *BELLIZA* to *HONORIA*, expressing her surprise at the resolution she had taken, and persuading her that it was occasioned through an over delicacy, which was rather a fault than a virtue to indulge.

Dear madam,



COULD I ever have thought *Philetes* would have wanted an advocate to *Honoriam*!—Could I have believed that when propitious fate had removed the only impediment to your mutual wishes, another should start up, raised merely by your own creative fancy!—I am charmed with your generous way of thinking; I applaud the tender compassion with which you mourn the death of *Constantius*, and the grateful regard you pay his memory:—The sentiments you express on this occasion, are truly noble and sublime, but as the extreme of *virtue* borders upon a *vice*, let them not transport you so far, as to sacrifice your eternal



eternal peace, and that of him you love, to a *chimera*.—This is over-acting the heroine, and does not *compliment*, but *affront* the intention of the faithful *Constantius*, who made you his heiress to the end you might *fulfil* your wishes, not debar yourself for ever from them.

INDEED, my dear *Honorio*, I cannot express the astonishment so wild a resolution as this you have taken has involved me in :—I cannot discern even the least shadow of reason you have for it :—You are not certain of having been any way accessory to the death of that unhappy gentleman :—He laid no violent hands upon himself, nor died of wasting grief, but of a fever, and supposing the agitations of his mind might bring it on, you are not answerable for consequences, which you could neither intend or foresee ; nay, were it even sure that despair at finding it impossible to gain your affection, was the sole cause of his untimely end, you have nothing wherewith to accuse yourself in this point ; you never encouraged his addresses, never was guilty of flattering him with a fallacious hope, and would you then, because you have been innocently fatal to one lover, wilfully destroy another ?—Must *Philetas* die, because *Constantius* could not live !—If departed spirits know any thing of what is done in the world they have left behind, that of *Constantius* cannot but be displeased to see his hopes of forming your happiness a second time defeated, and that neither alive or dead he had power of pleasing you ; and thus by straining gratitude to a pitch too high, you would become (what you seem so much to fear) really ungrateful ; and instead of doing honour to his generosity, render it in effect the source of misery.

BUT

BUT I flatter myself, from the opinion I have of your good understanding, that this enthusiastic flight of an imaginary duty, only proceeded from the first emotions of a too delicate and over-grateful sensibility.—I am impatient, however, for an opportunity of offering some arguments, too long to be inserted in the compass of a letter, in order to convince you, that to carry your sense of the obligation, conferred on you, beyond nature, is more romantic than just. With this view I shall hasten my return to *London*, some days sooner than I proposed, being ever, with the most perfect amity, dear madam,

Yours, &c.

BELLIZA.

P. S. I have wrote to *Philetes*, to bid him shew no regard to the present capriciousness of your behaviour, for so I took the liberty to term it: If he follows my advice, he will let you have but little respite; lay the blame on your humble servant, who is best able to bear it.



EPISTLE XCIII.

MIRA to a lady, who had very much entreated her to go with her to a masquerade, giving her the reasons for her refusal, and her opinion freely of that diversion.

Dear madam,

FEW things are capable of giving me greater displeasure, than that of finding myself under a necessity of refusing any thing to my dear *Fidelia*; but when I assure you, that to comply with what you now request

request of me, would not only be doing the utmost violence to my inclination, but is also inconsistent with my character, and the rules I have set down for my conduct in life, I dare say, you would not wish me to endure so severe a mortification:—It is certain, I never declared any dislike of the reigning diversions of the town; there are some which receive, as well as deserve, all the encouragement in my power to bestow; but there are others, which, tho' I do not publickly depreciate, I should be sorry to countenance, and among these latter, I must be so free to tell you, masquerades stand in the first rank of my aversion and contempt.

You know, my dear, in what manner I am, as it were, compelled to live:—There are many things I give into for the sake of not being thought particular, which my judgment entirely disapproves:—One of the things to which my humour, as well as reason, is most averse, is gaming; yet, one day in a week I have tables set out for that purpose, in two rooms, and seldom fail of mortification, from what others esteem; as a *route*, a *drum-major*, and sometimes a *hurricane*:—I go to court, pay compliments, measure my steps, and walk back out of the presence as others do, yet think it a kind of modish slavery, from which I would gladly be free, if it were possible, in my present station.—But as, thank heaven, I have no such obligation to frequent the *masquerade*, I pity those who have no better taste of the value of time, than to lavish it in that ridiculous entertainment.—Curiosity and persuasion once carried me thither;—but, good God! what a heap of absurdities, which way soever I turned, grated my ears!—  
How



How ashamed was I to see myself in a place; where an universal lye was the public profession; where the politest and most modest of the crowd strove most to conceal themselves; where common-sense seemed wholly banished, and ribaldry and idiotism were the established rules of conversation and behaviour.

To be free with you, my dear *Fidelia*, I look upon *masquerades*, as they are managed here, to be not only foolish, but immoral:—They afford a sanction to all the indecencies of speech at least, and a man who has some regard to his character of modesty, will venture to say that in a masque, which the most avowed libertine would blush to express barefaced.

I GIVE you my sentiments on this head, with the less reserve, as I am confident they are partly your own, and that you are so far from being over-fond of this diversion, that you have often made presents to others of the tickets you could not refuse, I wish I could prevail upon you to be yet less so, and that instead of going but once in a season, you would resolve never to go at all:—If you will take the word of an old poet, whatever is not worthy our approbation should be an object of our contempt.

*All human efforts have a certain claim,  
In more or less degree, to praise or censure:  
'Tween good and bad no medium here is found;  
Whatever's half the one, is all the other.*

I MUST own I am for no entertainments which my understanding will not permit me to repeat, and though we both have seen the late

Mr. *Thompson's* new play of *Coriolanus*, if instead of my going with you to the *Hay-market*, you will favour me with your company to *Covent-Garden*, I dare answer you will find your account in it, and not only pass your evening more agreeably, but feel a much greater satisfaction within yourself the next day:—I would not, however, if you are under any extraordinary engagement to the contrary, desire you to break through it:—I would have none of my friends be guilty of any thing that might be looked upon as affectation, but if you can find any reasonable excuse for changing your intentions, it will give me double pleasure, by rescuing you from the danger, impertinence, and fatigue of the vizard-ball, and improving my own understanding and spirits with the judicious and lively sentiments which your conversation can always furnish to her, who is, with the greatest sincerity, my dear *Fidelia*,

Yours, &c.

MIRA.



## EPISTLE XCIV.

[ *The answer.* ]

From FIDELIA to MIRA.

Dear madam,



IT is utterly impossible for me to express how high a sense I have of the obligation your last has conferred upon me:—As to be able to follow the amiable example you give our sex, has been always my ambition, so your friendly advice is the greatest

greatest favour you could possibly bestow:—To shew it is not thrown away upon me, be assured that no engagements to others, no inclinations of my own, will ever be of force enough to induce me to any thing the excellent *Mira* disapproves, when once I am so happy as to know her sentiments upon it:—The honour you do me in believing I have no relish for that scene of folly, called a *masquerade*, is very flattering to my vanity, and the more so as I am conscious of deserving it in some measure; for indeed, madam, it was more in compliance with those I converse with, than any self-gratification, which ever induced me to make one among that mingled rout.—As nothing can be more weak than to be guided by the judgment of others, merely because it is their judgment, I shall for the future have the courage to chuse for myself, whenever I am not so happy as to have the advantage of your council and example.

As breaking off one engagement for the sake of entering into another, I am afraid, would be looked upon as an affront to the company, as well as the entertainment, I must defer the pleasure of waiting on you to the play till some other night:—We have the misfortune to live in an age, when every thing that does not tally with the general vogue, is looked upon as ridiculous; and one is under a necessity, as you justly observe, of keeping certain measures, if one would avoid being the subject of raillery.—I shall, therefore, pretend business, see no company, keep close in my chamber, and amuse myself with some new books, which luckily enough are just sent in:—They must afford very little satisfaction indeed, if not more than will compensate



for what I should have found in the *Haymarket*; though they may not make sufficient amends for the loss of your conversation to which I am invited.—I have the honour to be, with a profound respect, dear madam,

Your most obedient servant,

FIDELIA.



### EPISTLE XCV.

*From BELLIZA to MILLAMANT, endeavouring to make her sensible of the folly and danger of encouraging a multiplicity of admirers; and persuading her to fix her choice on him she found most deserving among the number of those who addressed her, before she incurred the character of a levity which might lessen her in the esteem of a worthy man.*

Dear MILLAMANT,



AM sorry to say I find a pain in any thing that gives you pleasure, yet will not the sincere friendship I have for you permit me to be silent, while I see you hurried by a youthful vanity into a conduct which must in time be fatal to your peace of mind and reputation:—Consider, my dear, the incongruity of your behaviour:—You affect to laugh at the woes of love, to be above all susceptibility of that passion, you take all imaginable pains to inspire it in others:—Nothing delights you more than a new conquest, and how many soever you make, you cannot support the loss of one with any tolerable degree of patience:

—How

—How many arts do you put in practice to secure the heart you despise! What trouble do you give yourself to prolong the devoirs you are determined never to reward! For heaven's sake, ask yourself what you propose by all this, and what will be the consequence?—When your lovers swear they die for you, you either do, or do not give credit to their oaths; if the former, your manner of acting is the height of ill-nature and cruelty; if the latter, you should methinks instead of being proud, rather be ashamed to reflect you gave any encouragement for so gross an attempt, to impose on your understanding:—It is ungrateful and unjust to sport with the pains of a worthy man;—it is mean to flatter the vain views of an insincere and empty coxcomb.—But it is not either for the one, or the other, but for yourself I am chiefly concerned:—Remember the fate of *Melinda*, as described by good old *Drayton*.

*Melinda spread her splendid train,  
And swept the youths along the plain.  
By turns she smil'd, by turns she frown'd on every  
slave,  
Hope and despair alternate gave;  
But ah! how humbled was her pride,  
• They found her aim was only to give pain,  
So broke at once the servile chain  
And all her arts defy'd.  
Or on the walks, or on the green,  
No more she seems the woodland queen!  
No more her breast the glow of triumph  
warms,  
While in their bloom neglected are her charms.  
Her votaries once, indignant now,  
Pass scornful by, and scarce vouchsafe a bow;*

*Requital just! the nymphs and swains proclaim,  
And to the slighted fair impute the blame.*

BELIEVE me, dear *Millamant*, the conduct you at present pursue, will in a short time deprive you of all that admiration and esteem, you are so desirous of preserving.—A man of sense can ill brook a competitor in love, who is treated with the same regard as himself, much less to be put on a level with a coxcomb.—The encouragement you give to all will lose you all, and if so, you will be as unpitied as the poet's heroine.

I CANNOT suppose that, in your serious hours, you have made any resolution against marriage:—Permit me therefore to remind you, that it is high time for you to fix your choice, if you find any one among the number of those, who make their addresses, worthy of it:—If not, for heaven's sake, discard them all, and wait till some offer is made, to which you will have no objection; you know not but you may have some secret lover endued with every qualification, to render you as happy as a wife can be, who may be deterred from making you an offering of his heart, while he sees you encompassed with a herd among whom he does not chuse to rank himself.

BUT, however that may be, reflect I beseech you, how much your reputation suffers amidst these pretenders to your heart:—You will perhaps think it sufficient, that you are guilty of no attachment to any of them, in breach of innocence and virtue:—That you allow no liberties in prejudice to your character, or that should embolden any man to hope you might be brought to

*pardon*



pardon the greatest he could take :—For indeed tho' far be it from me to imagine you can forget yourself in this point, yet, my dear, I would have you remember, that we ought to behave so as to avoid all suspicion in the most censorious :—But put the case that none should presume to call your conduct so far in question :—Supposing the world in general should allow you as innocent as I sincerely do, yet vanity and levity are of themselves sufficient blemishes in reputation, and such as I before observed, will infallibly lose you the esteem of all men of true understanding :—Forfeit not then those expectations of solid happiness, which your birth, beauty, fortune, and a thousand amiable qualities, give you a just pretence to, for the poor, empty, transient pleasure of shewing your power over the hearts that either are, or feign themselves devoted to you.—Cease to take pains to captivate :—Reserve all your cares to secure the affection of him you shall find worthy of yours, and till you are convinced there is such a one in the world, forbear wishing to be loved by any other.

I SHALL make no apology for the liberty I take in giving you this advice. I am confident you will believe it, what it really is, the effects of a friendship always warm and sincere in your interest, and which I hope no misunderstanding will ever break off between you and her, who is, my dear *Millamant*,

Yours, &c.

BELLIZA.



## EPISTLE XCVI.

*From MARCELLA to POLYDORE, attempting to prove, that more solid happiness was to be found in friendship than in love; and desiring he will let her know how far his opinion coincides with her's in that point.*

*Sir,*



HAPPENED the other day into some company where the subject of conversation was on the different blessings arising from love and friendship: The greatest part of the company gave the preference to the former, but notwithstanding the celebrated *Ardella* was one of that number, I could not be complaisant enough to acquiesce, tho' to a judgment which has the character of being so superior to the greatest part of my sex.— I took upon me to maintain, that the ideas which arise from friendship, being more pure and spiritual than those of love, could not but afford more true and refined pleasures to a delicate mind, than those of a passion which having always some mixture of self-gratification in it, was liable to a thousand tormenting doubts and anxieties, as we always see among those devoted to it:—The one, I said, was a celestial flame, the other a meer earthly vapour, gross and wavering;—that the one was immortal as our souls, and would continue with us in paradise to all eternity; the other decaying, and perishable with our frames, and very seldom, if ever, of so long

long a duration :—The one, cried I, with some vehemence, finding myself opposed, lifts us to the *angelic* nature, the other is left to itself, and unacquainted with friendship's nobler blaze, would debase us to the *bestial*.

THE energy with which I could not forbear expressing my sentiments on this occasion, set the whole company into a fit of laughter, and turned the discourse, which before was very serious, into pleasantry :—Every one, even those who had not been on my side of the question, rallied me in their turn :—One called me a Platonic, another a Cynic, a third a Stoic, and all agreed, that I was an utter enemy to the tender passion :—It was in vain that I endeavoured to clear myself in this point :—The character is affixed to my name, and I must suffer the reproach until I shew a sensibility of love in myself, and inspire some worthy man with the same passion.

THIS is a reflection, however, that gives me little pain :—To secure the friendship of those I esteem is the chief of my ambition ; and as you, Sir, stand one of the foremost in that rank, hope you will not take part with the advocates for love against me.

IN my opinion, we never shew the dignity of our being so much as when we are found capable of relishing the joys of friendship :—joys which stand in no need of the senses for support, and are truly seraphic :—The soul here disdains to stoop to the low gratifications of flesh and blood, and, like its divine original, finds its pleasure in itself ;—its sole aim being to make the happiness of others : No jealous pangs, no an-



xious cares disturb the tranquility of mind ; and, if ill treated, as too often is the case, may transfer itself to a more worthy object, without incurring the censure of inconstancy, as in affairs of love :—No little arts are necessary to secure an adequate affection :—As we have no regard to the outward frame, and are charmed only with those beauties we find in the mind of our friend, there needs no more than to embellish that part in ourselves to preserve blissful union entire.

How then can any one pretend that such a celestial intercourse is not infinitely to be preferred to all the gross delights of a passion, which, however disguised, is sensual, and depending on fancy is liable to be erased by a thousand accidents ; so subject to change, that it rarely happens, but first or last, one of the parties becomes base, and the other miserable.

BUT I forget to whom I am writing ; those sacred bands which have so long and so inviolably linked you to the worthy *Acasto*, ought to have convinced me, there needs no arguments to engage you to give your opinion in favour of friendship ; but as one cannot be too much assured of what one earnestly desires, I entreat you will oblige me with a speedy answer, and, by your approbation, confirm me in sentiments at present so pleasing to me. I am, with the most perfect regard, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

MARCELLA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE XCVII.

[ *In answer to the foregoing.* ]

From POLYDORE to MARCELLA, testifying his approbation of her notions of friendship; but endeavouring at the same time to persuade her, that between persons of different sexes, the union is more perfect when heightened by love.

*Madam,*

YOU did not deceive yourself, O most adorable *Marcella*! when you imagined I should give my voice on the side of friendship, and in applauding those refined and exalted notions you have of it. — But while I admire those seraphic ideas with which you seem possess'd, would not wish you to throw the woman off entirely, in order to be all angel before your time. — Friendship indeed, when pure and disinterested, comprehends all earthly, as well as celestial blessings, but then, charming *Marcella*, I would have you remember, that such a friendship has no reserve, it gives all in its power, and thinks nothing its own, when wanted by the darling object: — How little possible is it then to enter into an engagement of that nature, with a person of a different sex, without being led into those inconveniencies with which you so warmly accuse love as entailing on its votaries: — I have, it is certain, the most sincere and perfect amity for *Acasto*, that one man can possibly have for another: — My heart, my  
purse

purse are open to him, he shares all my secrets, partakes in all my pains and pleasures, the one are softened, and the other heightened by his being a sharer in them:—Whatever befalls either of us, is equally felt by the other:—Yet, O *Marcella*! were I connected with you in the same union, would not my regards be different?—Would not *friendship* then lose its name, and assume that of *love*: *Acasto* gives me all he can, and should I not expect the same from *Marcella*?—Yes, and must receive it too, or you would be a friend but in profession, and turn apostate to the laws yourself prescribe:—Think not, therefore, there is a possibility of living with a man in such friendship as you seem to paint, and at the same time be an enemy to love:—Would such a friendship permit you to see him languish in vain for any thing in your power to grant?—Could you persist in being his friend, yet deny him a gratification you found so essential to his peace, perhaps his life?—No, no, divine *Marcella*, whoever is the happy man to have you for a friend, must and will also subject you to the laws of love.

IN fine, madam, there is so strict a connexion between love and friendship that they can never be separated:—Friendship between persons of the same sex, is no more than a mutual sympathy of souls, and love between two of different sexes, is friendship heightened by a greater degree of tenderness:—A great and generous mind is alone capable of truly feeling either of these passions: Both are equally above the narrow ideas of a confined and mean capacity, and whoever has sentiments elevated enough for the



the one, will likewise be susceptible of the other.

No longer therefore, most beautiful *Marcella* ! declare yourself the enemy of a passion, so near a-kin to that which you espouse with so much warmth : — I grant with you, that those wandering fires, those wild excursions of a wanton inclination, which wear the name of love, and are generally mistaken for it, are no less gross and earthly than you represent them, and utterly unworthy of a mind so delicate as yours ; but the love I speak of, is of a far different nature, it is spiritual and rarified as friendship, the soul is chiefly concerned in it, and though the body comes in for a share of the happiness it bestows, claims but the second place ; the enjoyment of the *person* is aimed at only to obtain the more perfect enjoyment of the *soul* : — The one without the other would be uncomplete ; the union of both is not only the most exquisite, but the most permanent felicity we can know on earth.

THAT I may see you inspired with, and equally inspiring such a love, is the best wish can be made, by him, who is with the most sincere attachment, madam,

Your most obedient servant,

POLYDORE.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE XCVIII.

*From LEONORA in the country, to her sister in London, giving her an account of a very tragical accident that had just happened at the lady's house where she was.*

*My dear sister,*

**A** DREADFUL occasion prevented my writing to you last post, and I am still so full of surprize, terror, and concern, that my hand is scarce able to guide my pen. — I acquainted you in a former letter, that *Fernando* taking the advantage of this recess from the duties of his new post, came down on a visit to his mother: — You know how in political matters he has turned apostate to the principles his whole family have thought it their glory to profess, but perhaps are ignorant he has equally renounced those of religion, acted in conformity to the modes of the times, and become an avowed deist as they call it, though I wish it may not deserve a name yet worse. — The news of the first change in him had given her ladyship much anxiety, but she knew not of the latter till his arrival, when not the respect he owed her as a mother, could keep him from turning into ridicule those sacred mysteries on which alone we depend for salvation: — This entirely destroyed all the pleasure of seeing him after so long an absence: — All she could urge was ineffectual to prevail on him to accompany us to church, and when private prayers

prayers were going to be read in the family, he always took up his hat, walked out, and said, he would return when the farce was over:— Yet did not the new principles in which he owed his promotion, nor the new tenets he had embraced, seem to afford him any satisfaction; on the contrary, all his behaviour rather denoted a dejection of spirits:—A constant gloom hung upon his brow, and when he affected to be most gay in his conversation, there was a certain heaviness in his eyes, which shewed his heart had nothing chearful in it.—On his first coming, he talked of staying a month, or six weeks, but had not been here eight days before he seemed uneasy to be gone, and told us, he thought the country less pleasant than when he saw it last; found fault with many alterations in the gardens, which every one else looked upon as improvements,—then quarrelled at the situation of his chamber, though it was the best in the house, on which my lady desired him to take his choice of any other; but all would not do, he liked none, and said he would go back to *London*:—In this manner, however, he continued with us a fortnight, and for the last two days had mentioned nothing of his departure:—Yet at the expiration of that time he left us:—O, my dear sister! He left us indeed:—But in what manner!—I shudder to repeat it.—

In the dead of night, those of the family who were not drowned in sleep were alarmed by the report of a pistol:—They called the rest, imagining thieves were breaking in, and arming themselves as well as they could, ran to the windows to see what they could discover; finding all quiet



quiet there, my lady, who by this time was got up, would have them search the house: — I durst not remain alone, so went with them through all the rooms, till coming to *Fernando's* chamber, and wondering that all this bustle had not waked him, they knocked softly, then more loud, and finding he did not answer, burst open the door; where, alas! they found him lying on the floor with the pistol yet clenched in his hand:—It appeared he had not been in bed, for on enquiry his servant told us he had ordered him to leave a candle, for he should sit up to read:—The candle was still burning on the table, on which was also a standish with a paper, supposed to be written by him just before his perpetration of this horrid deed; it contained these words:

“ How contemptible, even at the best, is  
 “ man! how fluctuating is the human heart!—  
 “ how vague, how wandering its desires!—  
 “ How little are we able to judge what it is we  
 “ truly aim at, or how long we shall prosecute  
 “ that aim we prefer at present!—Who can be  
 “ certain he shall not to-morrow loath, what  
 “ he to-day adores!—This shews there is no  
 “ such thing as a real good on earth:—If there  
 “ were, in the multitude of our pursuits we  
 “ should somewhere find it, and what was once  
 “ proved such, would always be so:—Love,  
 “ fame, ambition, wealth, when once attained,  
 “ are empty dreams, meer shadows, which we  
 “ wonder at ourselves for having wasted so much  
 “ time in chace of;—We all know this, yet  
 “ still go on in the same beaten road:—Roam-  
 “ ing from one acquisition to another;—never  
 “ easy, yet ever hoping to be so;—always ex-  
 “ pecting

“pecting happiness, and always disappointed :  
 “Success only serves to shew the worthlessness  
 “of the thing we have been toiling for :—The  
 “world is nothing else but a great hospital of  
 “fools, a *Bedlam*, where he that most excels  
 “in some new frenzy, attracts the greatest  
 “number of followers, and is the most con-  
 “siderable person :—Why then should we de-  
 “fire to live ?—Why wish to propagate so  
 “wretched a species ?—Were we capable of  
 “being influenced by the least spark of com-  
 “mon-sense, we should rather join in one reso-  
 “lution to plunge at once into eternity, and  
 “either be nothing, or more happy.

“*When I consider life 'tis all a cheat,*  
 “*Yet fool'd with hope, men favour the deceit ;*  
 “*Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay,*  
 “*To-morrow's falser than the former day ;*  
 “*Lies more, and while it says we shall be blest*  
 “*With some new joy, cuts off what we possess :*  
 “*Strange couz'nage ! none would live past years*  
     *again,*  
 “*Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain ;*  
 “*And from the dregs of life think to receive,*  
 “*What the first sprightly running could not give.*  
 “*I'm tired with waiting for this chemic gold,*  
 “*Which fools us young, and beggars us when old.*

“*DRYDEN* thought justly when he wrote  
 “these lines ; yet lived a long while after :—  
 “He wanted resolution, — I pity all who do.” —

I PUT this paper in my pocket, intending to  
 shew it to my lady as soon as she should be in a  
 condition to read it ; but, alas ! I know not  
 whether ever she will be so :—Her agonies are  
 un-

unutterable, — she mourns the loss of her son, but is much more terrified for his immortal part: I am little able to console, yet cannot think of leaving her till the arrival of her two neices, whom she has sent for from *Worcester*: — The whole family are in the utmost distraction, and never did poor creature, who promised herself so much satisfaction as I did in this country, meet with so severe a disappointment: — Poor *Fernando*, he now is convinced of those sacred truths he impiously presumed to call in question: — No acquisitions of power, wealth, or pleasure, could have made him happy, whose mind was not directed and balanced by religion. — O grant, heaven, that mercy may interpose between him and offended justice: — My tears flow too fast, I can write no more. — Adieu, my dear sister,

Yours affectionately,

LEONORA.



### EPISTLE XCIX.

*From SAPHIRA, MIRANDA, SERENA, and CLIO, to a young gentleman of Oxford, celebrated for his wit and learning, desiring him to write to each of them.*

S I R,



As they sent formerly to *Delphos* to enquire of *Apollo*, who was the wisest man in *Greece*, so we, on consulting *Leonidas*, who you know is the oracle of *London*, have received answer, that \*\*\*\* was the man of the most wit in *Oxford*: We then desired to know in what manner we should receive



receive benefit from his wit, at the distance of fifty miles, to which he replied, *by a literary correspondence*. We, therefore, all four, join to entreat you will immediately fulfil the divination, by sending to each of us an essay on a different subject, till when we subscribe ourselves your very impatient, but most humble servants,

SAPHIRA,

MIRANDA,

SERENA,

CLIO.



## EPISTLE C.

[ *The answer.* ]

From \*\*\*\* to SAPHIRA, MIRANDA, SERENA, and CLIO, *excusing himself from writing to any of them in particular, by the difficulty of addressing them in a proper manner.*

Ladies,



OW high an opinion soever I had of the oracle you mention, I should, for the future, give no credit to his judgment, if I could believe he has decreed me an honour which does no way belong to me; but I rather think, that like the priestesses of old, you have pronounced for him what he never meant to utter; but be that as it may, it is certainly a malicious contrivance to involve me in perplexities from which you might easily foresee I should not well know how to extricate myself.

It must be confessed the young *Trojan* was very much put to it, when obliged to decide between

tween

tween three goddesses, but my case is much more hard who have four to deal with:—Besides, the celestial appearances on mount *Ida*, had each her different attribute; he had only to consider, whether power, wisdom, or beauty most deserved the prize; now my divinities have in each of them all these perfections blended, and that so equally, that it is impossible to give the preference to any one?—How then shall I address to you?—If I begin with the most lovely *Sapphira*, will not *Miranda*, *Serena*, and *Clio*, have reason to be offended?—If to the most discreet *Miranda*, how will the rest of you take it?—If to the most enchanting *Serena*, or the most excellent *Clio*, it will be still the same:—Whatever epithet I give the one, is robbing the others of their due. And though you should even have so little of your sex in you, as to compromise this matter between yourselves, and resolve to take every thing in good part, how should I be able to forgive myself for the injustice I had been guilty of?

THUS you see, ladies, that by commanding me to write to each of you in particular, you have laid a stumbling-block at the very threshold of my obedience, which it is impossible for me to get over:—It would be too much vanity in me to imagine this pretty stratagem was contrived on purpose to catch the secret of my heart: However, I must take particular care that the little rogue shall not discover himself in my eyes, when next I have the happiness of seeing you, being determined to keep my partiality, if I have any, concealed from every one but her, in whose favour it is.

BUT

BUT all this is meer conjecture on both sides, I am no more assured that you had any view of the nature I have mentioned, in the injunction you laid on me, than you can be, that there are any grounds for my apprehensions of being detected; or that I am, or ever am like to be, other than of all, and each of you, what I subscribe myself,

Ladies,

An obsequious admirer,

And most devoted servant,

\* \* \* \*

*End of the* EIGHTH BOOK.



EPISTLES.





# EPISTLES.

---

## BOOK IX.

---

### EPISTLE CI.

*From CLIO in the country, to HILLARIA in London, acquainting her with the disagreeableness of her situation, and the reasons she had for preparing to return to town, much sooner than she intended on quitting it, with the character of her ladyship.*

*My dear HILLARIA,*



YOU will be surprized that I already think of leaving a retirement I proposed so much satisfaction in, and resolved to enjoy during the remainder of the season; but you will soon cease to be so, when I acquaint you how I am disappointed in almost every end I proposed to myself in coming hither.—You know there were two motives which induced me to take up my residence for some time in this village:—The one to avoid the smoke of *London*, and breathe an air which I had before experienced was agreeable to my condition; and the other to get rid of the impertinent babble of some persons, whose acquaintance

quaintance I could by no way so well escape from:—The first of these would afford me great refreshment, could I enjoy it in the full extent I flattered myself with doing at my arrival; but as to the latter, I have only exchanged voices, and have in the sound of one, all I flew from in those of a mixed assembly.

You saw the person I have the misfortune to be lodged with:—You were with me when she came in order to agree for the apartment:—You may remember she was in weeds; that she told us the first year of her widowhood wanted some months of being expired, and that she was the unhappy relict of a gentleman who having left her in indifferent circumstances, she lived in a very retired way, saw no company, and kept but one servant.—I often smile within myself at the kind concern you express after she was gone, lest being in the house with so disconsolate a person, whose sighs and groans could not but sometimes reach my ears, should have an effect on my temper to the prejudice of my health: Indeed I was a little apprehensive myself, that being naturally of a commiserating disposition, and apt to suffer in the woes of others, those of this sorrowful widow might touch me more deeply than I wished;—but, my dear *Hillaria*, let both you and I henceforward give up all pretence to penetration:—Never more let us venture to form a judgment at first sight:—Never were two people so grossly deceived as we have been:—for, would you believe it, this formal piece of mortality, who seemed to have done with all desires of flesh and blood, who looked more like a moving sepulchre, than a living woman, has under that mask of melancholly sanctity,

all the warm inclinations of an *Italian Bona-Roba*; the vanity of the more celebrated toast, formed to the capricious apishness of a girl just come into her teens, and eager to prove herself a woman, by being known to have a lover.— In fine, this antiquated memento of death and futurity, is a perfect miss, notable in her disposition, and, without the excuse of youth or beauty, like her, imagines her age and ugliness capable of rendering her the idol of the men, and the envy of the women.

I HAD been here but one night, when coming into my chamber, after having made me the usual compliments of hoping I had enjoyed a good repose, and that I liked my bed, she sat down, and without any ceremony began to tell me, that the greatest misfortune of widowhood was being plagued with a crowd of lovers:— That for her part, she was perfectly embarrassed with the multiplicity of addressers, which every day increased upon her hands,—*I do not know what they see in me*, said she affectedly, *I am not very young, nor do I think myself handsome, but go where I will, I am pestered with the importunities of one fellow or another.*— I told her, I supposed they imagined she was very rich. No, madam, replied she, *it is well known my husband left the greatest part of his substance in trust for me, and I have only a poor balance, not sufficient to maintain me as I would live.*

SHE run on for a good while, repeating the fine things were said to her, but let me only into one part of her character; I found her silly, vain, and conceited to an excess, but did not suspect her guilty of any amorous inclinations:



I thought that folly extinguished in her by age,  
and that the high-day of the blood had long since  
been over with her; — but alas, as the song says,

*Aged Phillis,  
Wanton still is :*

The poor creature is in love, distractedly in love,  
with a man young enough to be her son, whom  
she came accidentally acquainted with in a boat,  
and whose name, family, and circumstances she  
knows no more of, than he is pleased to tell  
her. — According to her report, he pretends an  
infinity of passion for her, but waves coming to  
the article of marriage, till he has taken the  
trust of her children's fortune from the hands it  
is at present lodged in, and transferred it into  
his: — The case between them, as I take it,  
stands thus: — She wants him to be the *husband*,  
he wants only to be the *guardian*: — She has a  
violent inclination to his *person*, he to her *effects*,  
which, as they certainly are very trifling, shews  
him to be either a very great villain, or in very  
wretched circumstances.

BUT what is all this to me? you will say. —  
Why truly it would be nothing at all, if the  
woman had not taken it into her head to make  
me her confidante, and were not continually  
teazing me with the repetition of her extrava-  
gancies: — One hour she is fearful of disobliging  
him, that she resolves to give up all, and trust  
to his honour for marrying her afterwards: —  
The next a gleam of reason shews her, that to  
go before a lawyer with him, on the score he  
presses for, is not the way to make him go with  
her before a parson; and according as her mind  
changes,

changes, she is sure to come into my apartment with the detail of what happens to be her sentiments at that time:—In vain my maid tells her I am busy, am laid down to sleep; no excuse can keep her out:—She cries she must speak one word to me, says she will not stay a moment, yet never leaves me till the whole of all has past between her and this young favourite, is related over and over, and always with some fresh addition.

WITH this stuff are my ears perpetually grated; I have no way of shunning the incessant din, but by keeping in my chamber, and locking the door against her:—Whenever I go into the garden, she watches my coming down, pursues and persecutes me the whole time I stay, and it is by a miracle almost I am sometimes happy enough to get back into my apartment without her.

YOU may think it strange that her lover should leave so much time upon her hands to be a plague to other people, but you must know, that for some reasons he thinks proper to conceal, he never comes a wooing till after day is shut in, and as for any other company, I doubt not but the same I have to complain of, has made all her acquaintance shun her, with the like care I would do, were there a possibility of success.

JUDGE then, my dear *Hillaria*, of the disagreeableness of my present situation, and pardon my troubling you with this long letter on so trifling a subject:—I design for *London* next week, but in the mean time should be glad you would

would send me something to fill my head with more pleasing ideas, than those which at present confound the little understanding heaven has been so good to endue it with. If while I remain here any thing can restore me to my former self, it will be a letter from you, which I shall impatiently expect, and am, my dear *Hillaria*,

Sincerely yours,

CLIO.



## EPISTLE CII.

*From THEOPHILA to VIOLANTE, on having received a letter from her, with an account that MARTASINDA had renounced all the faulty pleasures of life, and was turned Methodist.*

Dear VIOLANTE,



Received your surprizing narrative, and know not whether I am more rejoiced at the conversion of the late dissolute *Martasinda*, or grieved for those who are weak and wicked enough to ridicule her for it:—True devotion is seated in the heart, that is the temple of the deity, and in what place soever, or under what outward form soever we pay our duty to the Most High, it is certainly better than not to do it at all.—If *Martasinda* is sincerely touched with a just sense of the enormities of her past life, and has taken the road of penitence, we ought to hope it will conduct her to that goal which is the end of religion, though the path by which she pursues it, may not be just such as we could wish.



I LAMENT with you the unhappy divisions among christians, and believe it is chiefly to that we owe the growth of *deism*, or rather *atheism*, in these kingdoms particularly; but yet, I cannot be of their opinion, who maintain that there is but one way of worship acceptable to heaven, and that all others, though springing from the warmest zeal and purest love, is rather an affront than a sacrifice:—It is well, if to judge thus uncharitably, is not in effect a much greater error than the mistake itself, however gross it may appear to the too tenacious censurers.—I think there is something extremely reasonable in what Mr. Rowe says on this occasion.

*Look round, how providence bestows alike  
Sun-shine and rain to bless the fruitful year,  
On different nations, all of different faiths.  
And, tho' by several names and titles worshipp'd,  
Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise;  
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,  
One Best, one Greatest, only Lord of all.*

BUT we have a greater authority than Mr. Rowe, which forbids us to be severe on any religion or sect.—St. Paul tells us, that it is not following *Barnabas*, or *Cephas*, or himself, but he who knows the will of the Lord, and does it, is acceptable to heaven:—Let us not therefore repine, that *Martasinda* is converted by the *methodists*, but be glad she is so by any means.—Adieu, my dear *Violante*, I am always, with the most perfect amity,

Yours, &c.

THEOPHILA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE CIII.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, giving her some description of her brother's fine seat and gardens, with the manner in which she passes her time there.*

*My dear EUPHROSINE,*

**Y**OU kindly desire to know in what manner I divert myself in a family, the master of which is always abroad, and passes the greatest part of his time in exercises too robust for my constitution, and too noisy for my inclination, and where you cannot conceive I can have any opportunity of opening my mouth, unless I would descend to the conversation of the steward, house-keeper, or gardener, who I think may be looked upon as the chief domestics.—I might tell you that, thank heaven, I have not been so great a spend-thrift of the years I have lived in the world, as not to have laid up a sufficient stock of observations in my mind, wherewith to entertain myself in a solitude far less agreeable than this; but I will not so far impose upon your understanding, because I am sensible you know reflection and contemplation, however sublime, if not sometimes relaxed by amusements of a less serious nature, are apt to fix a certain heaviness on the spirits, which by degrees may grow into a melancholly, and render the best of causes productive of the worst effects; but I assure you, since my arrival here, my philosophy has been put to no such trial:—The ladies, not only of this, but of the neighbouring counties, under pretence

of paying their compliments to me, are glad of the opportunity of partaking the pleasures this dilectable recess is capable of affording:—My brother has indeed discovered an uncommon genius in rural elegance:—His gardens are laid out with the utmost propriety, and ornamented with a great number of exotic curiosities.—A winding hedge of myrtle, interspersed with jessamin and honeysuckles, divides the whole into five partitions, and I must tell you, that with how much indolence soever my brother behaves in public affairs, his mind seems not quite void of that noble spirit, which invigorated our ancestors.—In the midst of each of these fine plots, is placed the statue of some *British* hero, or distinguished patriot, and on the top of an embowered arch, high in the center stands the goddess liberty, with all the charms in the power of sculpture to bestow:—You will easily conceive, my dear *Euphrosine*, how greatly I was pleased with the sight of this hieroglyphic, and the other great examples of public virtue, which discovered to me what I so long had wished to find in the soul of a person so dear to me, both by blood and friendship:—I could not forbear, as we were walking together one day, expressing my satisfaction to him on this head, and told him that I was not without hope, that the heart, which paid so great a reverence to the virtues of antiquity, would in time be influenced to imitate them in practice.—To which he replied with a smile, *That may be, my dear sister, but you must give me leave to wait for a time, in which the virtues you mean shall become less obnoxious.*—I said no more, knowing how unwilling he is to explain himself on this head;—but to return to my description.

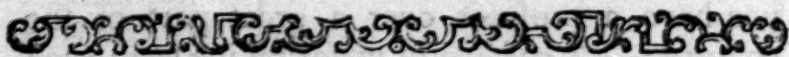
THE



THE walks gradually growing more narrow, are terminated by a mount, on which an ascent of marble steps leads to the eminence, whence you have a prospect over a great part of the country:—A cascade of water falling from each side, form little rivulets, across each of these is a bridge, where a *Tryton* stands inviting you to pass over to the other side, and take your ease in grottos, composed of shell-work, with banks of moss commodiously placed, either to sit or lye retired upon.—The foot of the mount between the rivulets is a large camomile oblong square, which brings you into a wilderness extremely thick and shady, and grottos, by which ways you may also go quite back into the gardens without repassing the mount:—Indeed, my dear, nothing can be more pleasant than this place; every thing conspires to charm, and lull the mind into a sweet forgetfulness of all its cares:—The warbling of the birds above your head, the agreeable murmur of the waters beneath your feet, the various odours from the surrounding plants, which perfume the ambient air;—the variegated beauties which salute your eyes what way soever you turn, may defend me from the censure of partiality to my brother's taste, when I say that nothing can be better contrived to regale all the senses at once, even to a profusion of delight, than this enchanting recess.

AFTER what I have said, you will not think it strange that I have too little time on my hands for contemplation; even now a flow of company are just pouring in at the gate,—I must hasten to receive them, and conclude with assuring you that I am, with the most perfect amity, my dear *Euphrosine*, yours, &c.

P. S. I need not tell you I long impatiently to hear from you ;—Once more adieu.



## EPISTLE CIV.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, giving her an account of a very surprizing adventure she had met with as she had been taking the air with her brother in the park, and the concern it had involved her in.*

*My dear EUPHROSINE,*



YOU know I have been accustomed to be pretty punctual in discharging the obligations my friends confer on me, as soon as it is in my power, and may perhaps think it strange that I have let two posts go from hence without paying the debt your last laid me under, but I assure you at the time I received it, and some days after, my spirits were in so great an agitation, that I was utterly unable to make use of my pen.—The occasion I dare say you will be anxious to know, and I therefore take the first opportunity of relating it.

I KNOW not whether in the description I gave you of my brother's fine retreat, I made any mention of his park, which I then had not seen, though heard much in the praise of:—The delight he takes in it, has made him often press me to go and see it ; accordingly we set out just at day-break, which you know, at this season of the year, is about four o'clock :—We went in a chaise and six, and had two servants on horse-back :

back :—As our journey was but seven miles, we proposed driving once round the park, and returning by the time at which I usually breakfasted :—As we drew near, one of the servants galloped before to give notice to the park-keeper in order that the great gate might be opened for the chaise; but he had not past us more than the length of his horse, when we saw him stop short, and the coachman driving on, *Here has been mischief done to night*, cried he; on which my brother pulled the string, and looking out, saw the grass was sprinkled with blood :—*Yonder lies a woman murdered*, said the man, *I do not see her move*. My brother at these words jumped out of the chaise, and ran to the place his servant pointed to :—I was too much frightened to stay behind, and immediately followed, where I beheld the most shocking spectacle my eyes had ever met :—It was a young creature who seemed of condition by the richness of her riding habit, which was green satin, fringed with gold;—she had no covering on her head, and her hair, which hung down on her cheek, was full of blood, which seemed to issue from a wound somewhere about her breast :—On a more close examination, we perceived some signs of life in her, and one of the men raising her a little, she opened her eyes half way, and presently after cried, in a faint voice, but distinct enough to be intelligible, *If you have any humanity in you, convey me to some place where I may die with decency* :—My brother, who has a great deal of compassion in his nature, was distracted at the impossibility there seemed of giving her any assistance, there being no town, nor even house near; but I had more presence of mind than he on this occasion, and sent one of the men to the park-



keeper's little hut, who being informed of the accident, came running out with his wife, and a bottle of brandy.—I made them fetch water in a large bucket, and having stript my patient to her shift and under petticoat, threw it upon her:—This I did to stop the blood, which by the swiftness of its flowing, I easily foresaw would be fatal, if her wounds were not so:—I found a large cut in her neck, another in her left arm, both which my brother said, seemed to be made with a hanger, and just below her breast, very near the pit of her stomach, a swelling of a round form, about the bigness of a *Portuguese* three pound twelve shilling piece, and very black: It was plain that this contusion had been made by a violent blow, but with what kind of instrument, or weapon, was past conjecture.

THE water had the effect I hoped for, the bleeding ceased, after which I washed the wounds with some of the brandy the woman had brought, and bound them up to keep the air from getting into them, with such things as the park-keeper's wife could furnish me with:—The smart which the brandy occasioned, I suppose it was, brought the poor lady to herself; she opened her eyes again, and would have spoke, but had not strength.

As there was a possibility she might live, if proper care were taken, we consulted in what manner we should dispose of her:—My brother thought it impossible she could be attended as befitting her condition, or the rank she seemed to be of, with the park-keeper, so resolved to take her to his house; but how to convey her thither safely without a litter was the difficulty: But  
this,

this, by the help of a little contrivance, we got over.—We put all the garments I had stript her of into one side of the chaise, and covered them with a blanket I made the park-keeper bring, raised a seat equal in my knees as I sat, then wrapt her up warm, and laid her across, so as her head rested on my lap, and her feet on the side of the chaise:—My brother got on one of his men's horses, and in this position, the coachman driving very slow, we brought her home, where she was immediately put to bed:—During this little journey, she had several times attempted to speak, but had not the power, and as I assisted in putting the pillow under her head, that she might lie as easy as possible, she caught hold of that hand which was nearest to her, and pressed it with all the force her weakness would permit, looking on me at the same time with eyes, which, though deprived of all their radiance, had yet an inexpressive loveliness in them, and seemed to speak all the sentiments of a soul overflowing with gratitude for the good offices she received from me.

A SURGEON, whom my brother had lost no time in sending for from the next town, being arrived, he searched her wounds, and to our great satisfaction assured us, that none of them were mortal:—That her greatest danger was the loss of blood, which he said had been so great, that had it continued but a few minutes longer, her life must inevitably have issued with it.—He added, that the contusion on her breast would take the longest time to cure, and seemed no less at a loss, than I had been, to guess by what means it had been occasioned.

AFTER

AFTER having given the necessary directions as to what regimen was to be observed in her diet, he desired, that above all things, care should be taken to keep her as quiet as possible, and that even when she received her speech, as he doubted not but she would after a little sleep, no questions should be asked her concerning the abuse she had received, nor any thing said in her hearing which had any relation to it; because the least agitation of spirits in her present state, might make her wounds bleed afresh, and be of the most dangerous consequence.—These orders being given, he took his leave, promising to make a second visit in the evening.

WHILE I was employed above stairs with the surgeon and his patient, my brother was no less hurried below:—The great hall was full of people:—A gentleman from *London*, whom some business had brought into the country, and was at a tenant's of my brother's, had the night before been robbed by his servant of all his money, his watch, several bank bills, and, in fine, every thing else of value he had with him:—My brother granted his authority, as *custos rotulorum* of the county, to pursue and search for the villain in all the houses liable to suspicion, and would have accompanied the gentleman himself, knowing him to be a person of family and fortune, had he not been too much disconcerted with the accident above related:—He made him an invitation to his house, however, on his return home from the pursuit, and insisted on his making it his home while his affairs detained him in the country. The stranger accepted the invitation, not having been very commodiously lodged,



lodged, as it was but a poor ill-furnished inn, though the only one thereabouts.

As nothing hindered my brother from going in pursuit of this villain, but the kind consideration that I should be too deeply affected with the condition of my fair patient, if left alone to meditate upon it, he staid at home with me the whole day ; — as it happened no company came, which I was extremely glad of, not being in a state of mind proper to entertain them : — I ordered my woman to sit by the bed-side of the wounded lady, and apply such things as were prescribed ; notwithstanding which, I went almost every hour into her chamber, and to my great satisfaction found she had taken several slumbers, which, though short, very much refreshed her : — She had recovered her speech, and on sight of me, cried, *My charming preserver and benefactress ! With what words shall I thank your goodness ?* — I replied, that I thought it, as I really did, the greatest piece of good fortune I ever met with in my life, to have the opportunity of being serviceable to her ; and that if she imagined any gratitude was due to me, she must shew it in a strict observance of the rules prescribed for her, which above all things was to forbear speaking, and to keep her mind as free as possible from all perplexing thoughts. — *When you have a little more strength,* added I, *I shall be glad to hear by what unhappy accident you were reduced to the condition you are in ; but till then, would be very sorry to indulge a curiosity which might cost you so dear : — I flatter myself with enjoying, in the friendship of so agreeable a person, a greater recompence than the little I have done, or ever can do, is able to deserve.* With these words I left the chamber, to prevent any answer she might have made. THE

THE maids, who had the charge of cleaning her garments from the blood with which they had been in a manner dyed, told me there was nothing in her pocket except a handkerchief, but in the inside of her stays, just within the lining, which they were obliged to rip for washing, they found a small picture which had been sowed in, as might be supposed for the better concealing it:—This they brought to me,—it was the resemblance of a handsome young man, with a crystal over it, set in gold, and a cypher of small diamonds on the back:—The glass was broke, the stones loose in their sockets, and ready to fall out, and both the frame and picture very much bent, as something had been pushed forcibly against it:—This made me imagine that a blow given her just in this place, had occasioned the contusion in her breast, the hurt being exactly of the same bigness with the picture:—I laid the jewel carefully by, not doubting but it was very precious to her, but resolved to make no mention of any such thing to her, till she had recovered a greater share of strength.

THE surgeon came in the evening according to his promise, but did not think fit to take off the bandages till next morning:—He found her entirely free from a fever, and gave us great hopes that her cure would be speedy:—After he was gone, and my fair patient left to her repose, my brother and self went to supper, but we had scarce seated ourselves, when word was brought, that the inn-keeper, who had attended the gentleman in pursuing his wicked servant, was returned and begged to be admitted:—My brother ordered he should be brought in, and asked if they had taken the fellow, on which he gave the fol-

following account:—That the party he was with, for they divided themselves into several small bodies, in order to prevent the fellow from escaping any cross road, having continued their pursuit some twelve or fourteen miles, one of the foremost spied a horse saddled and compleatly accoutred, grazing without a rider.—The gentleman presently cried out, it was his own horse, and the same his man rode away with:—*We then, said the inn-keeper, concluded our search was near at an end, as indeed it was, for we found him lying in a ditch covered with blood, and in an expiring condition: His skull was fractured, one of his thighs broke, and, I think, both his arms dislocated:—We did not, however, know at first how much he was hurt, and his master was beginning to rate the ingratitude and villany he had been guilty of towards him, when the wretch cried out:—O mercy, heaven, you do not know, Sir, the worst of my crimes!—What I have stolen may be restored, but Altezeera!—What of Altezeera, interrupted the gentleman in such an agitation as I cannot tell how to describe? Dead! dead! answered the wretch, murdered! barbarously murdered by my curst hand:—O mercy!—Mercy, heaven! and with these words expired.*

*THE gentleman, continued he, seemed quite frantic on bearing this confession; we had much ado to prevent him from running his sword through the body of him, who was now past sense of feeling it, and afterwards from exercising that act of desperation on himself:—I thought we should never have got him back to my house, and now he is there, I know not what to do with him; for he will certainly be mad;—but who this Altezeera is, or where the murder was committed, we cannot find out.*



I HAD not as yet an opportunity of telling my brother any thing concerning the picture that had been found in the stays of the wounded lady; but it now came into my head, that she was the same who the villain had so inhumanly abused, and whose supposed death had thrown the gentleman into such agonies:—As this would be easily proved by producing the picture, I ran immediately and fetched it, desiring both my brother and the inn-keeper to tell me, if it bore any resemblance with the face of the afflicted stranger:—They both assured me, that it did, and, in their opinion, could be drawn for no other:—On my relating where it had been found, my brother joined with me in believing the wounded lady, under our care, was no other than the *Altezeera*, who seemed so dear to the stranger; and that this second adventure would unravel the mystery of the first.—He therefore resolved to go directly to him, and put an end to his distress, by letting him know the good fortune we had of preserving a young lady that morning, who might, if providence had not sent us so opportunely to her relief, have been inevitably lost for ever, as her cruel abuser doubtless imagined she was.

I BEGGED, however, that he would not be too sudden in revealing the affair, lest the rush of joy, on such an excess of grief, might have a fatal effect, either on his reason or his life: My brother told me he was aware of it, and would behave with all precaution.

As the inn was scarce two miles off, my brother accompanied his tenant on foot, and in about an hour and a half returned with *Philander*,

der, for that was the name of the gentleman, whom he had in a manner forced along with him:—Though horror, confusion, and the most poignant anguish sat on every feature, I was immediately convinced he was the original of the portrait I had in my pocket:—My brother, in presenting him to me, said, *Sister, this gentleman imagines he has lost a mistress dearer to him than his life, by the villany of his own servant:—What say you, are we to judge wholly by appearances?*

*THIS* gentleman, answered I, *I hope is too wise to do so:—Heaven, for a trial of our fortitude, often threatens us with misfortunes it never intends to inflict:—I flatter myself what he so much laments, is of the nature I have mentioned.—Would to God, madam, said he with a sigh, which seemed to rend his heart-strings, I had the least room for doubt; but the villain with his dying breath confessed the horrid crime. Perhaps, resumed I, he might suppose his brutal rage had taken effect:—He might wound her, but not mortally:—Come, Sir, continued I, perceiving he was ready to sink with inward grief, which before he endeavoured to restrain, I beseech you take comfort:—I have a strong prepossession that the lady still lives to reward such constant affection as yours appears to be. I am of the same mind with my sister, cried my brother, and dare almost promise you a sight of the fair injured Altezeera, in a very short time. O, were there a possibility of hoping for the blessing, I would forgive all else in the power of fate:—But she is too surely dead:—Irrecoverably lost!—What miracle can restore her to me, dear, murdered Altezeera!—The loveliest, best of women, is fallen a sacrifice to, I know not what, inhuman motive.*

I WOULD fain have asked him if he could guess by what means she fell into the power of such a monster ; but easily judging he could not resolve me in this point, without entering into a narrative his present condition would but ill admit of, I deferred the satisfaction of my curiosity, till he should be more at ease to afford it me.

I SHOULD write you a book instead of a letter, if I were to repeat the many arguments made use of, both by myself and brother, to bring him into an imagination of the possibility of his mistress having escaped the cruel stroke intended for her. —All we urged, however, was ineffectual, till I ventured to speak somewhat more plain :—*Many a person, said I, has been extremely, nay dangerously wounded, and even laid out for dead, yet have recovered :—Who knows but in the very crisis between life and death, some heavenly-directed hand might administer relief, and save the soul just fleeting into eternity :—Perhaps, Altezeera, thus preserved, is this moment thinking of Philander, and longing to communicate to him the means of her preservation.*

I SPOKE this with such an air, as made him think there was something more in them, than merely to sooth his griefs by a flattering supposition, and looking earnestly in my face, *Ah, madam, said he, if any accident has discovered to you any thing relating to my Altezeera, I beseech, I conjure you to reveal it to me.*

*I am not certain, answered I, that a lady who was found desperately wounded this morning in a field adjoining to my brother's park, is the same you mean ; but if she prove so, I dare venture to assure*  
you



you of her life at present:—Where is that lady? cried he, impatiently,—the least glimpse of her face, the least accent of her dear, yet well-known voice, will soon convince me of my happiness or misery.

SHOULD the fair person I mean, replied I, be in reality your *Altezeera*, a visit from you in the condition to which she is reduced, might utterly destroy all the efforts have been made to save her, and be no less fatal than the wounds she has received must have been, without the immediate interposition of Divine Providence.—But, there are other ways to ease your suspense, which I will point out, continued I, provided you give me your solemn promise not to attempt seeing her, till she is better able to sustain so agreeable a surprize.

HAVING given me his word to submit to my directions in every thing relating to this affair, I asked him if he had never made a present to *Altezeera* of his picture? To which he answering in the affirmative, I shewed him the picture had been taken out of the wounded lady's stays.

JUDGE, my dear *Euphrosine*, of the transport this conviction gave him; I shall only tell you, it was such as sufficiently proved how necessary the caution I had observed in making the discovery was, to prevent it from taking too violent an effect on his understanding.

By degrees I proceeded to let him into the whole of this adventure, but he had no sooner known that it was to us she owed her preservation, than the expression of his gratitude exceeded

exceeded all bounds:—He threw himself at my feet, kissing my hands with the same ardour he would have done those of his mistress:—Embraced my brother, called him his guardian angel, and it was a considerable time before we could put any stop to the immoderate raptures of his joy.

I THOUGHT I had now a right to be let into the history of a passion in these days so very extraordinary, and no sooner signified my curiosity in this point, than he very obligingly gratified it, relating all that passed between him and *Altezera* during the whole progress of their loves to the very evening of that unhappy accident, which was near parting them for ever.

To repeat it in his own words, even if my memory would permit, which is impossible, would be too tedious, since three parts in four of the narrative he made us was expatiating on the virtue, beauty, sweetness of his mistress, and his own admiration of those amiable qualities, and even that which was most material, often interrupted with exclamations on the severity of his fate, which had thrown so many bars between him and the accomplishment of his desires. I shall therefore give the plain account as I selected it from the less material, tho' I cannot but say very affecting particulars.

*Altezera*, it seems, is the daughter of a gentleman whom some fortuitous events have raised to a pitch of opulence; yet not being content with enjoying his wealth in a private life, he neglects nothing that he thinks will tend to the aggrandizing himself and family, and as the most likely

likely way of succeeding in this point, takes all opportunities of testifying his attachment to the present possessors of the throne of *Great-Britain*. It has however succeeded so well as to make him taken notice of at court, and procure a commission in the army for his second son, and one in the navy for his third; as for the eldest he is of a different way of thinking, and will by no means accept of an employment under the government, though he had the offer of one, both lucrative and honourable: This would greatly incense the old gentleman, perhaps even enough to occasion his being disinherited, were the true motive of his refusal known, but he finds ways of evading it, and by joining his father in railing against the principles of *jacobitism*, makes him far from suspicious, that it is by them he is influenced to refuse whatever would oblige him to take the oaths. — *Ormusia*, for that was his name, has maintained a long friendship with *Philander*, but knowing him violent in that cause to which his father is so averse, never brought him home, for fear any dispute concerning party-affairs should happen between them: — They were, however, seldom a day asunder, and *Ormusia* being seized with a fit of the gout, which confined him for a long time to his chamber, could not live without the company of his dear *Philander*: — *Altezeera*, who had the most tender regard for this brother, on account of his being possessed of qualities infinitely more amiable than either of her others, was almost continually with him: — She either read some agreeable book, or sung to him, which greatly alleviated the pain of his distemper: — Here *Philander* frequently saw her, and here it was he first imbibed a passion he had never been sensible of before. — The person  
and



and accomplishments of this amiable companion of a brother so dear to her, had all the effect the possessor of them could wish on the young heart of *Altezeera*:—*Ormusia* observed in the eyes of both the desires with which they were inspired, and, as he thought, they were in every circumstance adapted to make each other happy, resolved to encourage this mutual flame.

IT was he who emboldened *Philander*, to hope *Altezeera* would not be inflexible to his offers, and contrived such opportunities for him to address her, as she could not well have avoided, even had she had an inclination to do so; but her brother's behaviour giving a sanction to her wishes, her lover found her more condescending than he could have hoped for without that pretence.—In fine, this tender intercourse ended in a mutual assurance of everlasting affection, and a solemn promise never to be but each other's.—*Ormusia* growing better, quitted his chamber, but *Philander* being now acquainted with the whole family, made his visits almost as frequently as before:—The old gentleman being much abroad, and his two younger sons at their respective posts, the lovers had many opportunities of repeating to each other the sincerity of that passion, with which both were equally inflamed, and *Philander* had now thoughts, as he knew no objection could be made, either as to his family, or estate, of declaring to the father of *Altezeera* his pretensions:—*Ormusia* approved of his design, and he went one day with a full resolution to address the old gentleman on that head.—No conversation had yet happened when *Philander* was present concerning party-affairs, so his principles on that point were a secret; but

but unluckily for him, a person who was well acquainted with them, and had seen him often with *Ormusta*, had that very morning informed the old gentleman of all, and asked him, how he came to permit his son to converse with a known *Jacobite*, such as *Philander*. Nothing could exceed the rage with which this piece of intelligence inspired the father, and when *Philander* entered, and was beginning to usher in the request he was about to make, with some fine speech proper for the occasion, — *Sir*, cried the old gentleman, *I hear strange things of you, and if you do not clear yourself of an accusation laid to your charge, must desire you to refrain coming to my house any more, or keeping company with my son: — Bless me*, continued he, *I might have been undone, utterly ruined in my fortune and character, if I had not been warned in time.*

*Philander* was so much confounded at this unexpected treatment, that he could only ask him what he meant by it. — *Why, sir*, replied the other, *I am told, by very good authority, that you are a malcontent, — a Jacobite, — an oppugner of the illustrious family of Hanover, or, in other words, a rebel.*

*HAD any man but yourself called me so*, answered *Philander*, somewhat warmly, *I should have known what sort of reply it would become me to make: — But the respect I have for you, is a bond I cannot break through: — Yet, sir, permit me to say, no word or action of mine ever gave cause for branding me with the odious appellation of rebel.*

*NO*, cried the old gentleman, pouring out a glass of wine, *let me see you down on your knees,*

*and drink confusion to the pretender, and all his brood.—Sir, said Philander, greatly shocked, it is not in my nature to wish confusion to any one, and I hope you are too good a christian to desire it of me in earnest.—Christian, or no christian, cried the old gentleman in a hurry, he that will not drink confusion to the pretender, his sons, and all his adherents, I say, is worse than an infidel:—But I find what you are,—all is true I heard of you:—Therefore, sir, I desire you will forbear my house, and if I hear my son continues to keep you company, he had better do somewhat else.*

I HAVE inserted this part of the dialogue, my dear *Euphrosine*, merely to divert you, and to shew you how unjust and ridiculous an over-acted loyalty may render a person:—*Philander*, however, who had his own reason for bringing his antagonist into better humour, appeared extremely cool, and though he could not persuade himself to deny his attachment to the *Stuart* family, he endeavoured to make the old gentleman believe that, though he had the most tender commiseration for the sufferings of those unfortunate exiles, and the greatest admiration of their virtues, yet he was far from wishing to attempt any thing in prejudice of the house of *Hanover*.

BUT this was so far from pacifying the father of *Altezeera*, that he grew more outrageous, and a second time forbidding him his house, the lover was obliged to return without accomplishing any part of the business he had come upon.

*Ormusia* after this durst not appear in public with *Philander*, but the same friendship as ever subsisted between them, and he not only saw him frequently



frequently in private, but also contrived interviews between him and *Altezeera*, who did not like her lover the less for his steady adherence to his principles, she being of the same herself.— But to return.

THIS lady having eighteen thousand pounds left her by her grandmother, to be paid on the day of her marriage, or when she should come of age, was under no necessity, in point of interest, to consult her father in the choice of a husband:—Duty, however, had hitherto restrained her from giving her hand without his permission, but as the prejudice he had taken to *Philander*, was as unlikely to be removed as it was unreasonable, she thought she might be dispensed with from rendering herself and lover unhappy merely to submit to so cruel a caprice.

HER brother fortified her resolution in this point, appointed a day for the celebration of their marriage, though it was thought proper by the lovers, as well as himself, that he should be present at it:—All things were conducted with that secrecy, that the old gentleman had not the least suspicion any affair of love was carrying on between his daughter, and the man he so much hated, till the eve before that morning, when she was to steal out, and give herself away for ever.

THE fatal discovery was made by her unhappily dropping a letter where her father found it:—By the description of his behaviour, it could only be compared to what we meet with in *Bedlam*:—He treated *Altezeera* with the most bitter reproaches, and had he not been with-held by his own servants, who feared he would kill her,

had certainly committed some outrage on her person; he locked her into the chamber, and kept the key, however, himself.

HAPPY for *Ormusia*, and the lovers also, that his name was not mentioned in this luckless letter, so that though his father upbraided him for having introduced such a villain (for so he termed *Philander*) into his family, yet he had no suspicion of his having any hand in the intended marriage; and the young gentleman had the address to prevent him from believing any thing against him in this point, though some there were that laboured to inculcate in him a different opinion.

NEITHER *Philander* in the absence of his adorable, nor *Altezeera* in her confinement, was without some glimpse of hope from the integrity of this dear friend:—He indeed practised every method for the enlargement of his sister:—When his father was abroad, he tried every key in the house, but could find none would open the door of her prison, and to force it was impossible, without the noise alarming the servants: There she was compelled to remain, till her father having formed his resolutions, went into her one morning, and bidding her follow him, put her into a coach and six, in which one man and two women attended to receive her.—She had no time for complaints, or expostulations:—The door of the house was immediately shut, and the coach drove away with all possible rapidity:—She was thus carried, without knowing whither, to this county, and placed in a small house, at present occupied by a person, who, I find, is a dependant on her father, where the person

person who received her, had strict orders to confine her, to let no person whatever have access to her, and to refuse her even the privilege of pen and paper.

THE father, tho' he entertained no doubts of *Ormusa* on this score, would not reveal to him how he had disposed of his sister; but the young gentleman, by the manner in which she was carried off, had some conjecture of the truth; which on the return of those who accompanied her, he had artifice enough to sift from the mouth of one of them.—*Philander*, who protests he would have searched the whole world for his beloved *Altezeera*, no sooner had an account where she was, than he immediately took horse, attended but by a valet de chambre, whom he had lately hired, but whom he found a fellow of an uncommon share of cunning, and therefore a person proper to be employed in the affair he had in hand; as he did not doubt but the fair object of his wishes would be kept as inaccessible, as while under the key of her obdurate father.

As our lover had no acquaintance in these parts, he took up his lodging at the inn I before mentioned; which, tho' a wretched one, was the most commodious for his purpose, as being the nearest to the house where *Altezeera* was confined.

THE valet had the address to make the discovery his master expected from him, and the transported *Philander* no sooner was informed of the place, which contained the idol of his soul, than he went in sight, and walked backwards and forwards at a distance, in confidence of not



being known there by any body but herself, whom he hoped to see at some or other of the windows.

His hope in this particular did not deceive him, he perceived her leaning her head on her hand in a disconsolate posture.—Finding she did not observe him, he made a noise with some little stones which he picked up:—This made her cast her eyes to the place where he stood.—She started, and appeared equally surprized, and pleased. Not daring to speak, for fear of being heard by any of the family, she made a motion to him to write; and put down a sling from the window, to shew by what means she might receive a letter from him.—They continued some minutes, exchanging the most tender and significant glances, but, all at once, she retired hastily, and at the same time waved her hand, in token for him to retire.

As he doubted not, but some person coming into the chamber, had occasioned this interruption, he obeyed the signal, and returned to his inn, where he past the rest of the day in writing to her; in the evening he was himself the bearer of his billet.—He waited not long before she appeared, and letting down the sling to which he fixed it, she made a sign that he should convey paper, pens, and ink, to her by the same means, which he afterwards did:—They continued this conversation several days.—The purport of most of the letters that passed between them, was contriving means for her escape, which at last was agreed to be made, by a ladder of ropes, the window not being very high; this ladder was to be conveyed to her as the letters

ters had been; but before that could be procured, she gave him notice, that a little girl belonging to the family, had said she had seen a fine gentleman waiting in the field behind the house, and therefore desired he would send his servant with his next letter: He had seen the child himself playing about, and as by coming frequently, he might be seen by some other, he thought proper to observe the caution *Altezeera* had given him, and his valet, from that time, carried what he wrote, and brought him her answers.

EVERY thing being prepared for her being carried off, the night was appointed in which she was to descend, and *Philander*, now imagined himself on the point of obtaining all he had so long and so ardently languished for:—The last night of his intending to stay in that inn, and which he expected would be the last in which he should be under any suspense, he went to bed, full of the most pleasing ideas.—Waking in the morning, and hearing the family were stirring, he wondered his valet did not come into his chamber, as was his custom, to attend his rising:—He lay still some time, thinking it to be more early than he at first took it to be, but undrawing his curtains, and finding the sun was very high, knew the day must be far advanced, on which he started out of his bed, and ran to the table, where he used to lay his watch, in order to be more assured; he could neither find that nor the picture of *Altezeera*, which he had always worn about his neck, but the ribband being a little torn, he had taken it off, in order to have a new one put to it.—He was a little surprized, but supposing his valet had

laid them in some other place, began to stamp with his feet, and call hastily for him :—Some of the people coming up, he asked for his man, and was answered that he was not yet returned. —*Returned, from whence?* cried *Philander* hastily; they replied, they knew nothing, but from where they supposed he had sent him.—In short, after some few more questions little to the purpose, but such was the confusion he was in, it was natural for him to ask, he was informed, that after he was in bed, the valet had come to the stable, ordered the best horse to be saddled, and when he mounted told the groom that he was going on an extraordinary affair for his master, and should not return till late the next day. —*Philander* then began to examine his cloak-bag, and found himself stript of every thing the villain could carry off, without being suspected by the people of the house.

*THIS*, said he, concluding his narrative, *is all I am able to acquaint you with, in relation to the design of that dead monster; it is Altezeera herself, who alone can inform us, by what magic arts he got her into his power, and what it was that prompted him to commit on such beauty, youth, and innocence, an outrage which the most savage African would never have been guilty of.*

WE pass the rest of the evening in admiring the goodness of Divine Providence, which frequently, when we think ourselves most lost to hope, by means the most unexpected, sends relief and snatches from despair.

IN the morning, the surgeon found his patient in as fair a way of recovery as could be wished,  
but



but yet not fit to hold any long conversation; the impatience of *Philander* to see her, is still, therefore, obliged to be restrained; my brother, to alleviate his discontent, has taken him out this day a fishing; and I seize on this interval to acquaint you with an adventure, which has somewhat in it remarkable enough to engage your attention, and excuse the length of this epistle, from, my dear *Euphrosine*,

Yours, &c.

ASTREA.

P. S. The moment I am let into the mystery of *Altezeera's* misfortune, I shall not fail to acquaint you with it. —Adieu.



### EPISTLE CV.

From BRILLIANTE to SOPHRONIA, acquainting her, that she is at present extremely divided between love and honour, and entreating her advice how to proceed, so as neither to do a violence to her inclination, nor injustice to a person whose solicitations had prevailed on her to give him hopes of marrying her.

Dear madam,



T is only from your prudence and experienced friendship, I have my hope of relief, in an exigence the most cruel, that certainly ever happened to any woman in the world.—I am, since last you saw me, involved in a sea of perplexities; whichever way I steer, threatening confusion to

my peace of mind, and reputation. — Assist me with your counsel, I beseech you ; but I know the intreaty will be needless, when you are acquainted with the cause, which reduces me to want it. Take it then, as briefly as the circumstances will admit.

You are not ignorant, how, for two whole years, I have been persecuted with the importunate addresses of *Leander* ; I say persecuted ; because, tho' I found nothing in his person, character, or conversation, to excite any aversion, or indeed to give me any just cause to refuse him, yet he was far from having the power of inspiring my heart with those tender emotions which are called love, and which methought somewhat told me were necessary to be felt for those to whom we intend to give up ourselves for life. — In fine, the consideration of what I owed his merits, and that generous and tender affection, which he has given me a thousand proofs of, would not suffer me wholly to reject him, nor could I think of yielding to his suit, without the most inexpressible reluctance. — We were on these terms together for the time I mentioned, till last week, wearied out by my friends on the one side, who, as I am turned of two and twenty, reminded me I ought to settle in the world, and pressed me to make an end of this affair, and the passionate solicitations of *Leander* on the other, I made him a kind of a half promise in his favour, at which he appeared in such an excessive transport, vowing the whole business of his life should be to shew how sensible he was of the blessing I had given him room to hope, that I felt no regret for the condescension I had made.

BUT

BUT, O! dear madam, that day was the last of my tranquility, the evening of the next I went with a lady to the opera; a gentleman sat near us, who, being alone, entered into some discourse with us, and said many gallant things, which, tho' I perceived were directed chiefly to me, I should have taken little notice of from any other man, but there was something, that to me seemed so enchanting in the manner in which he uttered them, the looks that accompanied them, and the mouth that spoke them, that I could not keep myself from taking more pleasure in hearing him, than all the fine notes of the music.—Towards the end of the entertainment, *Leander*, and a brother of the lady's, hearing where we were, came to see us safe into our chairs, on which I fancied this too charming stranger looked a little disconcerted, but drew back to give those gentlemen, whom he found were of our acquaintance, room to join us.—Till now, I never hated *Leander*, but at this instant I wished him dead, or any thing, rather than in the way of occasioning this interruption.—We all supped together that night, but I was such ill company, that the tender *Leander* seemed in the utmost anxiety for my health, asked me a thousand times if I had not taken cold, or if the kettle-drums had not made my head ach, prescribed twenty different remedies, and so much embarrassed me with this officious love, that every moment seemed an age till I got home and parted from him.

BUT then, alas! I was far from being at ease; the idea of my unknown conqueror ran in my mind, and would not suffer me to take the least repose.—I know you will condemn me, for



thus indulging my thoughts with a person so utterly a stranger to me, one I had never seen but once, and might probably never see again; one who might be already married or engaged; or if not already so, might have seen nothing in me capable of attracting his generous regards: I do assure you, madam, all these arguments I urged to myself, and added to them the Ingratitude I was guilty of to the love and constancy of *Leander*; but all was weak to stem the torrent of soft desires, with which my heart was overwhelmed at this one fatal interview.—As the poet says,

*A change so swift, what heart did ever feel!  
It rush'd upon me like a mighty stream,  
And bore me in a moment far from shore!*

You will expect, perhaps, I should give you some description of the charms that wrought this wonderful effect; but I am too sensible, the least I could say, would be suspected of a partial exaggeration, therefore shall refer to the character given of him by others, which, as I had soon the opportunity of hearing, I cannot finish my story without repeating.

NEITHER the morning, nor the various objects which day presented, gave any relaxation to my disquiets.—I traversed every room in my apartment, sat down in one, looked out of the window of another, took up a book, but had not power to read.—I went to breakfast, but relished nothing, I pour'd my tea into the sugar-dish instead of my cup, and in fine was in such an absence of mind, that I knew not what I did, and was incapable of any one rational word or action.

action.—My woman reminding me it was my hour of dressing, I adjourned to my toilet, but nothing she brought me to put on could please me.—I threw one set of ribbands on the floor, another at her head, tore a third to pieces:—Made her alter the curls of my hair twenty times over:—Sent her to my drawers for one thing, which, when she brought, I threw aside, and called for another.—While I was venting my spleen in this manner on my poor maid, who had never seen me before in such a humour, one of my footmen knocked softly at the door of the dressing-room, and on her opening it, delivered a letter, which he said was just brought, and required an answer.—Alas I did not know the hand, I opened it with some surprize; but, good heaven! how greatly was that surprize increased, when I found from whom it came, and what were the contents, which I transcribed for your perusal, not chusing to part with the original, for reasons, to which love alone can plead my excuse.

*To the most amiable BRILLIANTE.*

*Madam,*

“ HEAVEN, who is the sole disposer of all  
 “ human events, can alone determine, whether  
 “ I ought to date the æra of my happiness, or  
 “ misery from last evening.—It is needless to  
 “ tell you the person who sat next to you at the  
 “ opera, and took the liberty of speaking to you  
 “ as often as opportunity permitted, became  
 “ from that instant wholly devoted to you; those  
 “ eyes which made so sudden a conquest of my  
 “ heart could not want penetration to discover  
 “ the effect they had upon me.—Yes, ma-  
 “ dam,

“ dam, I own myself your captive, but could  
“ not submit to be so, without knowing the  
“ name of my conqueror.—I followed you to  
“ the place where you went, and perceiving the  
“ chair that carried you waited, concluded  
“ that was not your abode, and stayed at a  
“ house in the neighbourhood, till I saw you  
“ come out, and attended you at a distance, till  
“ you entered the house which I perceive is  
“ your habitation:—This morning I was so  
“ fortunate to learn your name, and that you  
“ are not married, but am ignorant whether  
“ pre-engaged or not; if the latter, I flatter  
“ myself, neither my family, fortune, nor cha-  
“ racter, are such as would make me de-  
“ spair that the honourable proposals I have to  
“ make would be totally rejected.—Be so good,  
“ therefore, I beseech you, as to indulge me  
“ with the knowledge, that if the blessing I am  
“ ambitious of be already disposed, I may, for the  
“ future, avoid all interviews, so dangerous to my  
“ peace; or, if your heart is free to receive the  
“ soft impression of a faithful love, I may en-  
“ deavour, by all the services in my power, to  
“ be the happy man.—This consideration, ma-  
“ dam, will prove your generosity equal to  
“ your beauty, and I hope will not be thought  
“ too presuming in me to intreat, since, if to  
“ gain you be among the things that are impos-  
“ sible, prudence requires my utmost efforts to  
“ check the hopeless passion. And, if happily  
“ for me it is otherwise, I cannot too soon be-  
“ gin to testify, with how much ardor and sin-  
“ cerity I am the charming *Brillante’s* adorer.

“ ORONTES.”

WHAT agitations this billet threw me into,



I leave it to yourself to judge; for you, madam, have doubtless known the force of love for that happy man, to whose memory you have been so faithful, as never to admit a second choice, tho' left a widow in all the pride of life, and blooming beauty.—I will not, nor indeed can I pretend to give you any exact detail of the various, perplexed, transporting ideas, which, by turns, crowded into my imagination, at a declaration so unexpected, so unhop'd for, so unthought of; I neither knew what I ought to judge of this affair, nor in what manner I should behave.—The reserve of my temper made me loth to write to a man I had so little knowledge of, especially on such a subject, but there appeared so much justice and reason in his request, that after a good deal of debate within myself, I at last resolv'd to comply, but how I should answer was the greatest difficulty.—To tell him I was under a previous engagement, and entirely reject the offer he made me of his heart, was doing too great a violence to my own; and to encourage his pretensions, after the hopes I had given to *Leander*, seem'd dishonourable to both; but I will not take up your time with repeating the different arguments that my generosity and inclination urg'd on each side the question; I will only tell you the latter prevail'd, yet not so far as to render me wholly guilty of a breach of the other. An expedient between both presented itself to me, as you will see by the answer I gave, which I here enclose you a copy of.

To ORONTES.

“ Sir,

“ A DECLARATION of love, from a person

“ so

“ so entirely a stranger to me, seems so very  
 “ extraordinary, that you cannot be surprized I  
 “ have so long detained your messenger, on the  
 “ uncertainty in what manner I should receive  
 “ it.—Were I in reality mistress of more per-  
 “ fections than I can pretend to be endued  
 “ with, it would be a ridiculous and unpardon-  
 “ able vanity in me to imagine they would have  
 “ force to make, in so transient a view as you  
 “ had of me, an impression of the nature you  
 “ make profession of; and I should think your  
 “ letter dictated by meer caprice, or curiosity,  
 “ to try in what manner a woman would be-  
 “ have on such an occasion: But fancy can  
 “ create merits where there are none; and is  
 “ more frequently than *reason* the director of  
 “ inclination.—If this should happen to be the  
 “ case, gratitude and good manners demand a  
 “ civil return.—I therefore flatter myself, my  
 “ character will not suffer by this complaisance,  
 “ since it extends no farther, than to inform  
 “ you I neither am, or ever intend to be under  
 “ any engagements, but such as shall be ap-  
 “ proved of by Sir *John Worthby*, who is the  
 “ nearest relation I have, and whose advice shall  
 “ always direct,

“ BRILLIANTE.”

I THOUGHT myself extremely politic in re-  
 ferring him to Sir *John*, as it would be the surest  
 touchstone of the sincerity of his professions, and  
 also give me time to collect my wandering  
 thoughts, so as to be able to judge what it  
 would best become me to do, in order to gratify  
 my inclinations in favour of *Orontes*, yet not give  
 his less fortunate rival room to complain of infi-  
 delity.—The more I considered, however, I was  
 only

only the more distracted; tho' what I had said to *Leander* did not amount to a promise, yet would I have given the world there had been a possibility of recalling it; I easily perceived he depended on it, made himself sure of me, and seemed the most contented man alive, when he had most reason to complain. — All that day, and the succeeding night, I laboured under inexpressible agitations: — The next morning Sir *John* sent a servant to desire I would come to his house, the gout preventing him from stirring out, and added that he had business with me of the greatest importance.

I WAS not without some suspicion, that it was on the score of *Orontes*. — My heart fluttered at the thought, and I hurried to obey the summons, with a precipitation, which, after declaring the foolish situation of my mind, you will not wonder at.

HE received me with a smile, and wished me joy; I asked of what? *Of having charmed the heart of the most accomplished gentleman in town, said he, and of an estate so much superior to what your fortune could expect.* — I could not restrain my blushes, but affected to be ignorant of his meaning, till he told me *Orontes* had been with him; and having signified, that he found I had resolved to be directed by his choice, had entreated his interest. — *I am infinitely obliged to you, my fair cousin, said Sir John, for paying me this deference, as I am no otherwise entitled to it than by my sincere good wishes for your happiness; but since you have done me this honour, I have ventured to give Orontes my promise of all the assistance in my power, and that as I cannot go out, I would engage*  
you



*you to sup with me this evening in order to introduce him to you in form as a lover, who, in my judgment, merits your best encouragement.*

HE then told me, he had been intimately acquainted with the father of *Orontes*, knew the estate which devolved to the young gentleman at his decease, and that there was not the least objection to be made to him, provided his person was such as I could like; and, added he, *I look upon you to be too good a judge of what is agreeable, to be blind to the many perfections he has received from nature as well as education, and think if you had formed in your imagination a man, such as would render you the most blest and enjoyed of your sex, you could not have exceeded what is really to be found in the accomplished Orontes.*—I need not say how delighted I was to hear this character of him from the mouth of Sir *John*, but I dissembled it as well as I was able, and feigned some reluctance at consenting to the interview he proposed. —I was at last, however, prevailed on to yield to what I more passionately desired than any thing this world could give, and I took my leave, promising to return about six in the evening.

AT the appointed hour I went, having, as you may believe, neglected nothing that I thought might confirm the favourable opinion *Orontes* had entertained of me: I found him there before me, Sir *John* presented him, and he accosted me with the usual forms on such occasions, but I had enough to do to receive his salutation as that of a person who was more indebted to the recommendation of my kinsman, than to my own inclination. Lady *Worthy* had prepared a very elegant

gant entertainment, after which, being just a set for *whist*, we went to cards, *Orontes* was my partner, which gave him an opportunity of saying many things to me, equally gallant as tender.

It growing late, he waited on me home, made me the most passionate declaration of his love, had my permission to visit me the next day, and to renew his professions; he gave all the tokens imaginable of thinking himself happy in the progress he had made, and I was no less so in my own mind, to find that this second sight of me had not lessened the passion the first had inspired him with.

BUT, madam, when I was left alone, and had leisure to meditate on the circumstances of this adventure, I could not forbear trembling at the consequences.—The violence of *Leander's* long and constant flame, seemed to threaten all that was terrible, when he should come to know he had been supplanted in that affection he had flattered himself with by a lover of a day old.—I found there was but too much reason to fear, he would not tamely suffer this new rival to bear away the prize he had long, by all manner of services, fought to obtain.—The most fatal images now presented themselves to me.—The reproaches I should receive from him, perhaps from the other also, on account of that pre-engagement *Leander* might pretend;—the censure the town would pass on me for my imagined levity;—all came at once into my head, and rendered my night more tormenting, than the day had been transporting.

My

My inquietudes had certainly but two just a foundation.—They still remain upon me, nor can even the presence of *Orontes*, who I have seen twice, since we met at Sir *John's*, entirely dissipate them.

*Leander*, as yet, knows nothing of his mishap, fortune has been so much my friend, as to take him out of town for some days, and given me time to reflect on the capriciousness of my fate.—But alas! What does it avail?—I always regarded *Leander* as a man of honour; thought myself obliged to him for the sincerity of his attachment, but never either loved him, or pretended to do so; yet, as I have been inadvertent enough to say some things, which he has construed into a growing affection in me, to be convinced of the contrary must be the most cruel disappointment.—I am grieved to think the pains I must inflict, yet to relieve them must feel more poignant ones myself.—What, madam, shall I do? I esteem *Leander*, and I love *Orontes*. Both pursue the same aim with me, and will be equally miserable in missing it.—Tell me, dear madam, is there a way in nature for me to extricate myself from this perplexity? I would marry according to my inclinations, yet would not lose the good-will of *Leander*, nor have my character blemished by the accusations of his despair.—O! that he loved me less, or I had never known what it was to love another:—Had I never seen *Orontes*, I might have given my hand to *Leander*,—have lived with him a dull, insipid, but innocent life; if happiness had not been my portion, yet should I have been free from wretchedness; but, what a superlative degree of wretchedness, to suffer *one* to possess  
my



my *person*, while *another* triumphs over my heart.—Can I yield to the endearments of *Leander*, yet languish with the utmost height of passion for *Orontes*!—I shudder at the thought—'Tis death, or worse than death.—Yet can I, to gratify this passion, sacrifice gratitude, generosity, and honour, run the risk of involving him I love, and him I ought to love, in perplexities, which may be lasting as their lives.—I speak not of the ills which may happen to myself, the least of which is loss of reputation, and a consciousness of having acted wrong

ONCE more I beg you will favour me with your advice, and believe me that I truly am, in spite of my distractions, with the greatest respect,

Dear madam,

Your most obedient servant,

BRILLIANTE.



# EPISTLE CVI.

From SOPHRONIA to BRILLIANTE, in answer to the foregoing.

Dear madam,



KNOW of nothing, which for a considerable time has given me more pain, than the account your last brought me.—I am extremely grieved to find in you a proof of those unhappy consequences, which I alwas thought threatened any promises made to a lover, previous to those before the altar.—When we come there, it is time enough to declare our sentiment; all assurances we give of our affection before-hand, tho' made

made with never so much sincerity, are frequently broke, and when kept, I have observed, are seldom fortunate.

If it is dangerous, then, to engage ourselves to a man we truly love and prize above the rest of his sex, how much more is it to do thus to one, who is indifferent to us; we cannot, having a heart unprepossessed, be certain, but that in a moment an object may be presented to us, which may at once destroy our former insensibility, and teach us, indeed, what it is to love.—This has been your case, and you have fatally experienced a mischief, which, I doubt not, but you were far from apprehending.—But remonstrances of this nature are now too late.—You do not want to be made sensible of your inadvertency, but to receive advice, how to remedy the inconveniences which may probably attend it.—You are so good to request this of me, and I will give it you with the utmost sincerity, according to the best of my judgment.

I CANNOT persuade you, my dear *Brillante*, to give yourself to a man you do not love, even tho' you did not love another; much less as you are possessed with so extreme a passion, and for one whose merit, by all account, for I have heard much of him, seems to justify all the tenderness you have for him.—I cannot too much applaud the delicacy of your sentiments, and that nice sense of honour which makes you tremble at violating what you say, and I will not disbelieve, was no more than a half promise.—I heartily pity *Leander*, who it is certain loves you to an infinite degree, and is a very worthy man; but it would be an ill return to  
his

his love and constancy, to give him a wife, who would think herself miserable in being so:—A wife, to whom, the more he endeavoured to endear himself, the more he would be disagreeable:—A wife, who, in his arms, languished for another, and who, in every action, shewed she was his more by compulsion than inclination.—Indeed, however unhappy *Leander* may think himself in being rejected by you, he would find himself much more so in being accepted, in the present situation of your heart, which according to your description of it, and the merits of your conqueror, seems not very likely to change.

How then shall you behave, you say, how get off from the encouragement you have given *Leander*, without incurring the censure of levity from him and all his friends?—I must own it a very difficult point, nor do I think, proceed which way soever the circumstances between you permit, you can totally avoid some accusations of that nature: I know how stinging they will be to a woman who thinks as you do, but yet they will be light in comparison with those severe upbraidings which will attend the consciousness of having rendered the man so dear to you, yourself, and even *Leander* also, unhappy, by the fulfilling an inconsiderate promise, which his importunities alone extorted from you.

HOWEVER, as the longer *Leander* continues in the hope you have so unfortunately given him, the more will his affection increase, and consequently the disappointment be the greater, I would have you receive him with the greatest  
cool-



coolness, and tho' I think it would neither be good manners, nor gratitude, to preserve that ill humour towards him, you tell me you did, on your having first seen *Orontes*, yet I would have you behave so, as by degrees to let him see how impossible it is for you ever to love or marry him. — If possible, conceal from him the addresses of his rival, and as that would be difficult in this town, where all eyes are on the watch for such discoveries, I think it highly proper you should retire to the house of some friend in the country, strictly forbidding him to follow you. — When you are there, let Sir *John*, who I find is perfectly in the interest of *Orontes*, make use of all his rhetoric to convince *Leander*, that the match he has so long solicited, could not bring happiness to either party; and according as he behaves on that occasion, let him either venture, or not, to insinuate that you might marry to greater advantage.

As our kindred are for the most part guided by interest, Sir *John's* appearing in the matter will take away great part of the blame from you; and the world, and even *Leander* himself, will be apt to imagine, you rather yielded to the persuasion of so near a relation, than to any change in your own inclinations.

THIS, I think, will be a much more eligible way of proceeding, than precipitately to reverse the hopes he at present flatters himself with. — To find himself at once rejected, and for the sake of a rival, might produce some desperate effects, perhaps, even fatal, either to the loved, or unloved, perhaps to both. — Whereas, time, the argument of friends, and your reserve, may at last bring this impatient lover to a more moderate

derate way of thinking, to judge with temper on what you shall tell him, and make him know, by experience, the truth of *Oroonoko's* maxim,

*Degrees make all things easy.*

THUS have I given you my faithful sentiments, as to the dilemma you are in, and leave you to improve on the scheme I have laid down for relieving yourself from it; if your own ingenuity, actuated by a passion fertile in expedients, supply you with a better, I shall be sincerely rejoiced, none being more truly desirous of your happiness than, dear madam,

Your most humble servant,

SOPHRONIA.



EPISTLE CVII.

*From CLEORA to ARDELIA, on the wickedness of scandal, and the inhuman pleasure some people take in exposing real faults, and broaching fictitious ones, to the ruin of the fairest reputation.*

Dear ARDELIA,

LEAVE it to the divines to decide, what sin it is which heaven itself has determined not to pardon; but certainly there is none which on earth deserves so little forgiveness, as that of scandal and defamation. — Even murder seems to me less cruel, less atrocious. — The person stabbed, only meets before the time that fate to which all nature is condemned; but the slaughter of reputation is a poinard to the soul; — and life but prolongs the sense of pain. — Yet this glaring iniquity, — this savage sporting, passes for wit in  
VCL. II. H those

those who practice it, and is an agreeable entertainment to the hearers.—Methinks, it should rather shock, than delight any one who pretends to the least good nature, to hear the real errors of their fellow-creatures, set forth and magnified with all the aggravating circumstances that witty malice can invent. But where no cause is given for censure, where the most perfect innocence is no defence, and even that openness of behaviour, and unaffected cheerfulness, which are its truest indications, are construed into the marks of a vicious inclination, the crime of those who do so, ought to be as detestable to man, as most surely it is to heaven.

I DOUBT not but you will readily imagine, I have the story we heard last night in view.—Indeed, my dear, I cannot easily forget the unbecoming flouts, the scurril jests, which the greatest part of the company passed upon two absent ladies, who, as it proved, had no friends to take their parts. As neither you or I were acquainted with the persons and characters of the young persons scandalized, we were obliged to content ourselves with saying we were sorry if there were any real grounds for what we found gave the assembly so much diversion.—You know how little weight the displeasure we testified had to put a stop to the career of raillery, almost every mouth was full of:—But I must now inform you, that this morning I saw a gentleman, who is well acquainted with the ladies in question, and on whose veracity I dare depend.—He assured me, upon his honour, that they were so far from giving any room to authorise the injurious treatment I related to him, that nothing could be more modest and inoffensive than their deport-



deportments ; and that it was his firm belief, their thoughts and inclinations were entirely conformable to what they appeared.—He told me, however, that he had heard somewhat of the nature I had repeated, which he supposed had been invented by some wicked person : *But*, said he, *as I am confident, there is not the least truth in it, I am amazed it did not immediately subside, and die with the other lies of the day.*—I replied, that I had always observed the *left-hand* trumpet of fame was more sonorous than the *right* ; that the fatal blast, once sounded, reached through every quarter, and with repeated echoes, silences the softest notes of gentleness and humanity.—As one of the best of our *English* poets justly expresses it :

*On eagles wings immortal scandals fly,  
While virtuous actions are but born, and die.*

As I know you will be equally glad with myself, to have a just pretence for vindicating the reputation of the two young creatures, so barbarously traduced, I could not forbear immediately acquainting you with the opinion my friend has of them.—If he should happen to be deceived, by his inclination to believe the best of every one, and we should be found guilty of defending a bad cause, it will at least be an error, which all the humane and good-natured part of the world will easily forgive. I am,

My dear *Ardelia*,

Sincerely yours,

CLEORA.

*End of the NINTH BOOK.*



# EPISTLES.

---

## BOOK X.

---

### EPISTLE CVIII.

*From PEROCLES, to a lady, who had asked his opinion concerning apparitions; giving her a very remarkable account of one he had himself seen.*

*Madam,*



YOU were so good, last night, to ask my opinion concerning apparitions; to which, you may remember, I made but an evasive answer, not choosing to speak my sentiments, or rather my perfect conviction, on that head, before persons, who, I knew, would turn into ridicule the most solemn assurances I could give them. — I determined, however, to take the first opportunity of resolving the question you put to me; which I shall do in such a manner, that, if your dependance on my veracity be in any degree proportionable to what you have flattered me with, will leave you under no doubts hereafter, concerning that matter.

NOTHING is so injurious to the credit of *real* facts, as the formation of *feilitious* ones, which have

have any resemblance of them. It is, certainly, the many absurd stories, which have been reported of ghosts, that has so much destroyed our faith in all of that nature.—If our forefathers believed so much, we believe too little.—People generally run from one extreme to another.—To avoid the superstition of former times, this wise age flies to infidelity, in things yet more essential to the happiness of futurity, than this I am about to treat upon.

BUT I will not take up your time with a repetition of any of those arguments, which have been urged both for, and against the question: I know you are perfectly well versed in what the sacred writings say concerning it; nor are you altogether unacquainted with those many well attested narratives, which the history of all ages presents us with; I shall only relate an incident that happened to myself, and to which I owe my conviction; and, when I have told you all the circumstances of it, leave it to your own judgment to decide whether, or not, I could be imposed upon by the force of imagination.

*JUNIUS* and myself were fellow students at *Oxford*; we had the greatest intimacy together of any two in the university; a parity of sentiments and humour, indeed, linked us in a more perfect and solid friendship than is ordinarily found between persons of the age we were.—As we had both of us a pretty serious turn of mind, we entered frequently into discourses concerning the invisible world, the state of departed souls, and how far it was reasonable to suppose they had any knowledge of the transactions of those they had left behind.—I am ashamed to say, neither



of us had such just notions of futurity as we ought to have had :—We ran too much into the mode of free-thinking, and were not far from doubting, if the soul had any existence at all after the body became senseless.—In one of the conversations we had on this topic, it was agreed between us, that which ever of us died first, he should return, if possible, and give the other certain information of the truth. It happened, that a few months after, *Junius* was taken ill of a fever, which carried him off in a few days :—During his sickness, tho' I was, almost the whole time I could spare from the duties of the college, never from his bed-side, I mentioned nothing of this promise, nor, indeed, did it come into my head, till some time after his decease ; but one night, happening to sit up somewhat more late than usual, and being alone in my chamber, revolving on some passages I had been reading, relating to futurity, the conversation I had with *Junius* returned fresh into my mind, and not having seen any thing of him, as he had made me to expect ; too much strengthened me in the disbelief I was ever inclined to have of the existence of the soul after its separation from the body. In this disposition I went to bed, where I had not lain three minutes, and was far from being inclined to sleep, before I saw the curtains drawn gently open, and the figure of *Junius* standing between them, looking directly upon me.—I felt no terror, yet when I attempted to speak I found myself unable ; but the gentle spirit waited not for my salutation, but with a voice soft and benign, as was his countenance,—Perocles, said he, *Divine permission warrants me to make good my promise ; —I come to assure your wavering faith in immortality, and convince you that*  
there

*there is another world, vastly different from that you inhabit;—I knew it before my dissolution, but not till the instant of it, when my eyes closed to all sensual objects; my guardian angel, who had defended me from falling into the gross vices of the age, clad in ineffable splendor, and the most dazzling beauty, stood all confest before me, and spreading his radiant wings between me and a gulph of nameless horrors, into which I thought myself just falling, bore me more quick than thought, or the lightning's sudden flash, into the regions of eternal bliss; where, prostrate at the throne of mercy, unutterable brightness! glory inconceivable! the fiat of my redemption was pronounced, while myriads of angels tuned their golden harps to songs of joyous praise.—Farewel;—believe, O Perocles! and you will be blest as I am.*

THIS said, he vanished in a stream of light, too dazzling for human sight to bear;—the strong refulgence struck me for a moment blind, but harmony divine beat on my ravish'd ear sounds which no instrument composed by human art could ever convey:—My soul was filled with celestial ardors, glowed with sacred fires, and doubtless had a taste of those immortal extasies, which are the portion of the blest above.—The raptures in which I had been absorbed, beginning by degrees to dissipate, and the power of recollection returning, I considered temperately on what had past,—I was well assured it was not the illusion of a dream,—I had not slumbered since I went to bed,—my waking eyes had beheld the form of *Junius*, tho' much more beautiful than I had ever seen him when alive;—my ears had heard him utter truths I had so often presumed to call in question,—I had no longer any pretence to countenance infidelity, and was a

second time, dissolved in grateful adoration to the Supreme Being, for having vouchsafed to convince me by so extraordinary a method.

I LEAVE it to yourself, madam, to judge of this matter, as you shall find most reasonable. —The belief, that departed souls are sometimes permitted to appear, is no part of our creed, tho' that of a future existence is so; and is no otherwise necessary to be inculcated, than as it is an undeniable demonstration of the other. —I am confident your faith in that, which is the essence of revealed religion, stands in need of no modern arguments to strengthen it; I shall therefore trouble you no farther, than to assure you I am,

With the greatest respect, madam,

Your most humble servant,

PEROCLES.



### EPISTLE CIX.

*From PANTHEA at Paris, to MIRANDA at London, in answer to one she had received from that lady, expressing her surprize that she stayed so long in France.*

*My dear MIRANDA,*



ARS has now sheathed his bloody sword,—Bellona has withdrawn her thundering engines,—the peace at length is happily concluded,—the ports are opened, and the smiling waves court me to return to the embraces of my expecting friends.—What excuse then, say you, can I make for loitering here?—Indeed, but little.—

Yet



Yet it is not that I prefer the gardens of *Luxembourg* to *Windſor* foreſt, or the *Theuleries* to *St. James's* park; — or that the banks of the *Seine* have more charms for me than our own auſt *Thames*; — or, that I am at all leſs an *Engliſhwoman* for having been two years in *France*. — No, I aſſure you, my dear *Miranda*! for more than half that time, I have longed to be at home, with an impatience, which it would be the utmoſt vanity in me to imagine any of my friends felt for ſeeing me there: — Yet I know not how it is, but the people of this kingdom have ſomething in their manner, that forces one, as it were, againſt one's reaſon, nay, againſt one's inclination too, to do juſt as they would have one.

My things were all packed up, — poſt-chaifes were ordered, — and every thing was ready for my going to *Calais*, when madame, the counteſs *De Valerſois*, came in, and laid an embargo on me and my little equipage. — This lady is of *Roan*, in *Normandy*; ſhe had juſt received a letter, that her ſiſter was going to be married to a nobleman of that province: The wedding was to be celebrated with great magnificence, and her preſence at it was not to be diſpenſed with. — She ſaid ſo many obliging things to me, in order to prevail on me to accompany her, that I had not the power of reſuſing her requeſt; which, indeed, I was the more readily induced to grant, as I knew I could take ſhipping at *Dieppe*, whenever I pleaſed, for *England*; ſo on engaging her promiſe not to inſiſt on my returning with her to *Paris*, I at laſt conſented, and to-morrow we ſet out.

I SHALL now, however, get looſe from all

the enchantments of this gay metropolis, and do not apprehend I shall meet any, where I am going, capable of detaining me long, tho' Monsieur *De Marivaux*, who is to be of our company, tells me, he will conjure up a spirit, that, in spite of all my efforts, shall keep me in the circle of *Normandy* much longer than I intend. —What he means, I know not, but think myself pretty certain, that his wit, celebrated as it is, will be scarcely effectual for this purpose :— It will not be impolitic, notwithstanding, to take all the precautions I can, to preserve me from any spell he may design to prepare for me ;— as I have found by experience, that the strength of my own resolution is not at all times, and in all circumstances, to be entirely depended on, your friendly assistance must be my kind auxiliary in this point.—I do not flatter you, when I assure you, that your commands for my speedy return to *England*, will have more weight than all that can be done to persuade me to continue, even a very little longer time, absent from it.

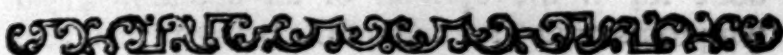
My next will be dated from *Roan* ; where, if I find any thing worth communicating, I shall not fail to give you an exact account of it.—And now my dear *Miranda*, I have nothing more to add, but what, I hope, you are already convinced of, that wherever I am, I am always,

With the most perfect amity,

Yours, &c.

PANTHEA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE CX.

*From PANTHEA at Roan, to MIRANDA at London; with the account of a very extraordinary adventure, which had happened just before her arrival there.*

**I** HAVE now the pleasure to acquaint my dear *Miranda*, that after a most agreeable journey, I am safely arrived at *Roan*.—We were met, within three leagues of the city, by the young lady, her intended bridegroom, and several of the principal inhabitants, who conducted us to a spacious hotel, where we found all things prepared in the most elegant manner for our reception;—the wedding, however, will not be solemnized this fortnight, so that you must not expect to hear of my embarking for a whole month at least.—In the mean time, I shall present you with the history of an adventure, so very extraordinary, that I should be ashamed to recite it for the sake of its credibility, could I not bring, were there occasion, not only the whole city of *Roan*, but half *Normandy*, as vouchers of the truth;—nay, I know not but, by this time, it may have reached *Paris*, scarce any thing, that ever happened, having made a greater noise.

“MADAMOISELLE *St. Clercy*, the only daughter of a wealthy merchant of that name, was, in the 17th year of her age, seized with a violent disorder in her head and stomach, which, at length, threw her into convulsion fits, in one



of which she expired, at least she seemed to have done so, in the opinion of all about her, no symptoms of any remains of life being perceivable through her whole frame.

“ IT is the custom all over *France*, to make the day of interment the next, or the next but one, at farthest, after that of the decease; for which reason, I heartily pray, whenever I make my exit, it may be in a country where people are not so hasty to get rid of their friends.—Poor mademoiselle St. Clercy was dressed in her funeral habiliments, carried into a room hung with black, and laid on a couch covered with the same: The equipage of death was all set forth: Her parents, and the rest of her friends withdrawn: None but two priests, who were appointed to attend the corps, and pass the night in prayer for the peace of her departed soul. Their oraisons were not half told over, before some symptoms of life appearing in their fair charge, the family were immediately roused, who finding breath was, indeed, returned, put her into a warm bed; which, with the help of cordials, and other reviving spirits, prescribed by the physicians, in a few hours restored her both to her speech and senses.

“ FOR a few days she seemed to enjoy a most perfect health; her convulsions had quite left her, her eyes resumed their former lustre, and her complexion all its freshness: But soon the roses faded in her cheeks, and a livid paleness overspread her face;—she grew extremely lean, yet her waist so much enlarged itself, that she was judged in danger of a dropsy: Remedies  
proper

proper for that distemper were given to her, but without any effect.

“ HER disorder, as it proved, sprang from a very different cause, than what it was ascribed to. — In fine, she was great with child, and the physicians having discovered it, found themselves under a necessity of acquainting her parents with it.

“ IT is not to be doubted, but that so alarming an information must involve them in the utmost confusion: They flew to the apartment of their daughter, and upbraided her with the deception she had put upon them, in terms severe enough, yet, suitable to the occasion. The first shock of this accusation threw her into a swoon: On her recovery she fell at their feet, and protested her innocence with the most bitter imprecations, accompanied with tears of mingled shame and grief. — They looked on each other, and knew not what to think; and both were equally tempted to suspect the skill of the physicians, rather than the veracity of a young creature, whom they had bred up in the strictest rules of truth and virtue, and whom they had never found to deviate from either. — They sent, however, to consult other gentlemen of the faculty, and also several skilful women, who all joined to confirm what the former had alledged, to the distraction of the young lady, and the perplexity of all her kindred.

“ AT last the dreadful hour of conviction came on: — She fell into those agonies, which all women are condemned to suffer in becoming mothers; — yet still she persisted in denying she  
had

had ever transgressed the laws of chastity: Believing herself in the pangs of death, she begged her spiritual director might be sent for.—He came.—After confessing to him those trifling offences, which human nature can never be said to be totally free from, she desired absolution; but he refused, telling her, he was well assured she had not been sincere in her confession, and then exhorted her not to deceive the world, or heaven:—He remonstrated to her, that the crime of which she was accused was venial, in comparison with that of denying it in those solemn moments. On this she wept bitterly, but still avowed her innocence.

“ THIS manner of behaviour appeared so monstrous in her, that every one cried out, she merited no pity, or assistance.—Her mother, however, suffered a midwife to come to her relief, and she was, soon after, amidst horrors inconceivable, delivered of a son.

“ THE measures which had been taken to prevail on her to relate the truth, and her steady perseverance in attesting her ignorance of what was laid to her charge, even after a living proof of it was brought into the world, afforded much matter for speculation: The story spread from one to another, till it became the general discourse.

“ THE ecclesiastics were most of all concerned, and knew not how to judge of it: The whole conduct of mademoiselle *St. Clercy* had, till this unhappy accident, been unblameable, and they could not account for her becoming, all at once, so hardened in guilt.—Some among  
them



them had the superstition to imagine she had been, unknown to herself, made pregnant by an *incubus*, and therefore urged that both she and the infant should be committed to the flames. The affair was laid before the bishop, and a grand consultation was held among the reverend fathers, in what fashion she should be proceeded with:—His lordship was willing to question her himself, before he would determine on any thing; and for this purpose she was cited to appear, as soon as she should be in a condition, at his palace, where several of the superior clergy were also required to be present.

“THE day appointed being arrived, she went, led by her weeping parents, who stood in little less need of support.—The answers she gave to the bishop’s interrogatories, were the same with those to her confessor, and to others who had examined her on the same subject.—On which he was going to pronounce a sentence, which it is thought would not have been the most mild, when a young gentleman, who had the appearance of an officer, rushed hastily into the room, crying out, nothing could be decreed, with justice, against that lady, till what he had to urge in her defence was heard. The permission he desired being granted, he approached the throne, where the bishop was sitting, and after making his proper submissions, surprised the whole assembly with a speech; which, at I had it from one who took it down in shorthand, I have translated as near the original as I could.

*The*

*The declaration and confession of Monsieur La URAIMONT, formerly a novice of the order of St. Francis, now a cadet in the army.*

“PARDON me, my lord, and you most reverend fathers, that thus uncalled, I presume to appear before your sacred tribunal; but truth, justice, and all those laws, by which an honest soul is bound, oblige me to vindicate the spotless innocence of mademoiselle St. Clercy, and to confess the guilt, you are about to condemn, is all my own: Should my life be judged the sole expiation of the crime, I voluntarily offer, even that, a sacrifice to the offended laws, and the fame of this much injur’d lady:—But I will not detain your lordship’s attention, by any unnecessary prelude.—Being intended for the church, I was a novice of the order of St. Francis, at the time of mademoiselle St. Clercy’s suppos’d death, and was made choice of to assist father Belcourt in his devotions, on that occasion:—The closeness of the room, the heat of the weather, or some other cause, affected the good father so much, he was obliged to go out for a little air. I had heard much talk of this lady’s beauty, but had never seen her; and having this opportunity, had the curiosity to lift up the lawn with which her face was covered; she seemed indeed extremely lovely:—I could not think her dead:—I fancied I saw breath issue from her lips:—I put my hand upon her bosom and felt some warmth in it:—A diabolical propensity that instant seized me:—My reason was extinct:—Religion, honour, decency no longer had any place in me.—’Twould be to add to my crime to repeat the manner of it.—What I have already said, and the consequences, with which

which your lordship is acquainted, prove it but too plain.—I shall only say, that in the struggle between life and death, she was entirely ignorant of the violation I had the impiety to perpetrate.—Father *Belcourt* soon after returned, and we alarmed the family.—As to myself, the death of an elder brother giving a sudden turn to my affairs, I quitted the altar, to which, indeed, I had no real call, and went into the army.—I returned, but last night, to this city, when upon hearing the whole circumstances of this unhappy affair, I hesitated not a moment to reveal the truth; as I should have looked upon it a greater crime to have suffered it to remain a mystery, than that of committing the act itself.

“ AFTER this declaration, he resigned himself to the judgment of the bishop; but the affair was of too much importance to admit of an immediate decision. The whole assembly was filled with the utmost astonishment at what they heard, and for the present could only order him into confinement, and acquit mademoiselle *St. Clercy* of all blame.

“ THESE spiritual judges had many consultations, before any thing could be determined on so extraordinary a case.—Mons. *Uraimont* had many friends, particularly an uncle, who is prior of the benedictines; these alledged in his favour, that the crime he had been guilty of, came not under the denomination of sacrilege, the lady not being actually dead at the time of committing it, and this argument, joined to the generosity of his behaviour, pleaded so strongly in his behalf, that it was thought proper to drop all further prosecution.

“ THE



“THE clergy thus appeased, nothing remained for Mons. *Uraimont* but to make what satisfaction was in his power, to the injured family of *St. Clercy*; which he did, by publicly espousing the young lady, and settling on her a very large dower.”

THEY were married but last week, and it would be too tedious to repeat half the witticisms, which this adventure has been productive of: Besides, so much of my paper is already used, that I have only room to subscribe myself, as ever, my dear *Miranda*,

Yours, &c.

PANTHEA.



### EPISTLE CXI.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, with the continuance of the history of PHILANDER and ALTEZEERA, as begun in a former book.*

*My dear EUPHROSINE,*



CONCLUDED my last with an almost assured hope, that the adventure related in it, would end to the satisfaction of the parties concerned; an unlucky turn has happened to cast a gloom on the late fair prospect, and involved us all in a second confusion.

*Sure every passion, but fond love,  
Unto its own redress does move;  
But that alone the wretch inclines  
To what prevents his own designs.*

INDEED,

INDEED, I am more angry with *Philander*, than I have words to expreis:—Certainly, if ever lover had cause to be contented with his fate, he had;—to find his mistress, whom he thought dead, alive, in the same house with him, and in the care of persons who took a pleasure in promoting her recovery;—and that the very accident which threatened him with her irrecoverable loss, had given her liberty, and put it in her power to be for ever united to him:—These, I say, one would think, were reflections to have made any reasonable man happy;—but I see plainly, not only by his behaviour, but that of some others, whom we both know, the truth of the poet's words,

—*That to be wise and love,  
Is hardly granted to the gods above.*

THOUGH he had heard the surgeon every day repeat his injunctions, that his patient should be kept extremely quiet;—that no unnecessary questions should be put to her, and all occasions of obliging her to speak, most carefully avoided; adding, that on her silence and composure of mind, the certainty of her cure depended; and though I had given him the most solemn assurances, that the moment she should be in a condition to hold any conversation, she should be informed of his being there; yet notwithstanding all this, it was with the utmost difficulty I restrained him from shewing himself to her; and though I am pretty certain, from the whole tenor of his deportment, that he loves with as much sincerity, as any man can do; I am at the same time convinced, that it was more the fears of offending me, than any apprehensions

prehenfions of the confequences which might attend his vifit, that deterred him from going into her chamber.

FOR four days, however, I kept him within the bounds fo neceffary to be obferved, but on the fifth, when I was engaged with fome ladies who were come to vifit me, his impatience fo far prevailed on my brother, as to gain his confent for gratifying him fo far as to fee *Altezeera* when ſhe was afleep, on condition, that he ſhould content himſelf with a bare fight of her face, without attempting to diſturb her repoſe.

HIS requeſt was accompanied with ſuch moving expreſſions, that my brother could not reſiſt the force of them:—He went with him to the chamber of *Altezeera*, and being told by the perſon whom I had ordered to attend her, that ſhe was juſt fallen into a ſlumber, they drew near the bed, and *Philander* opening the curtain gently, had a full view of the face he ſo much longed to ſee:—Fatal curioſity! how dear has it been like to coſt him? His ungovernable paſſion broke through the bounds of reaſon, diſcretion, and even care of the beloved object, and perhaps, without even knowing what he did, he cried out in a tranſport, —'Tis ſhe! — By heaven, 'tis ſhe herſelf! and at the ſame moment ſeized one of her hands which lay over the bed-cloaths, and put it to his mouth with an eagernels as going to devour it:—This preſſure, joined to the loud exclamation he had made, would have awoke the ſlumbering fair had ſhe been in a more deep ſleep than the preſent anguiſh of her condition could be expected to permit:—She ſtarted, opened her eyes, ſcreamed, and fell immediately  
into



into a fit, out of which she recovered to relapse into a worse: *Philander*, now sensible of the ill effects of what he had done, railed like a man wholly deprived of reason:—My brother, tho' extremely disconcerted, forced him with much ado out of the chamber:—She grew so bad, that all the servants in the house were called to her assistance; I heard the noise, and excusing myself to my friends, flew to the chamber of *Altezeera*, whom I found, as I then thought, in the agonies of death:—the surgeon was sent for, and a physician, to join his endeavours also for her relief;—indeed I despaired that it would be in the power of either to afford her any:—I was in too great a concern to enquire presently, if any accident had happened to occasion so sad a change in her; but her own words, when the intermission of her fits gave her leave to speak, let me into great part of the truth:—*The inhuman wretch*, cryed she, *has murdered his master!*—O *Philander!* *Philander!* *but I follow thee;* then fainted away, and on her recovery, *Where is the dear shade?* resumed she, *why so soon vanished?*—*He was here but now, — there, there he stood.*—Thus did she rave between the intervals, and I asking hastily if any one had been in the room, was informed by my woman of what I have related to you.—I cannot tell whether my grief for the effects of this accident, or rage at the occasion of it, was most predominant; but this was not a time or place to express my sentiments, and casting about in my mind what was best to be done, I thought that as she had seen her lover, and imagined it was his apparition, to convince her it was his real self would be less prejudicial than the error she was in:—I therefore told her, that *Philander* was living, and had

no other wounds than those on his mind for the dangerous condition to which the villany of his wicked servant had reduced her;—*Philander*, cried she, *living!*—*and you know him, madam, and our unhappy story!*—*He is*, answered I, *a guest at present in this house.* And then perceiving she was in a condition to attend to what I said, related to her all I knew of this adventure; the remainder, I told her, must be her part to unfold, when heaven should be pleased to give her strength to do it.—*But*, cried she hastily, *may I not see Philander!* *Did he appear before me only to give me terror?*—*and shall I not again have the consolation of beholding him whom my soul longeth after, and for whose sake I wish to live?*—I then ordered he should be called, and it seems his distraction for his late behaviour was so great, that it required no less than such a pleasing mandate to restore him to his senses;—he came, and throwing himself on his knees at her bedside, conjured her to forgive the fright which the impatience of his love had occasioned. There needed little rhetoric to obtain what he requested, and the scene between them was extremely moving; but the exertion of her spirits on this sudden flow of joy, after the hurry they had been in with a contrary emotion, threw her again into fits so violent, that happy was it for us all, that the doctor and surgeon came in to our relief;—the latter of these finding so sad a change in his patient, after having left her in the morning so much better, shook his head, and told us, he feared his orders had not been complied with; to which I answered, that indeed they had not, and the present condition of the lady was owing to an accident which had thrown her mind into some confusion; but in-  
treated

treated they would do their utmost for retrieving this misfortune:—*Philander*, who had looked very silly all the time I was speaking, now cried out, *Restore her, and make your own demands, though it be my whole estate.* It is not to be doubted, but that they assured him, nothing in the power of their skill should be wanting:—On examining her pulse, they found it much disordered, and the surgeon, when he took off her dressings, said the wounds were much inflamed;—they both, however, gave us hopes that if she kept twelve hours from a fever, she might get over this shock;—strict orders were again repeated, that every thing about her should be as still as possible, which *Philander*, too sensible of his late error, will not transgress.

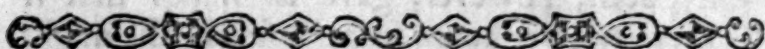
THE time specified by the physicians passed over without any symptom of a fever being discovered; but she was, and still continues so excessive weak, that when she attempts to speak, her voice is scarce intelligible:—I fear it will be some time before she recovers strength enough to relate that which we yet are ignorant of, concerning this adventure:—Her life, however, is now judged to be out of danger;—*Philander* is never from her chamber, but when decency obliges him to retire:—His tender assiduities, certainly contribute greatly to restore her to that composure of mind, without which all exterior remedies would be applied to little effect;—so that, angry as I was, at the disregard he paid to my intreaties, or the orders of the surgeon, I am now of opinion, that the prejudice done her by his disobedience, is well atoned for by the inward satisfaction I can perceive she now enjoys, and have therefore heartily forgiven him that  
act



act of rashness, and my brother for permitting it.

THIS is all I am able to inform you of at present, but hope a few days will give me more light into an affair, which yet seems big with mystery. — Till then, adieu! — I need not tell you with how much sincerity I am, my dear *Euphrosine*,  
Yours, &c.

ASTREA.



### EPISTLE CXII.

*From URANIA to MIRA, returning Dr. Burnet's Sacred Theory of the Earth, which that lady had lent to her, and expressing the satisfaction the perusal of those volumes had afforded her, especially that part which related to the millennium, or Christ's thousand years reign on earth.*

Dear madam,

FAVOURS conferred by you, afford a double benefit, as they are always well adapted: First, you search into the wants of those you love, and then generously bestow relief; — had you sent me a book of novels or new poems, they might have entertained my gayer moments for the present; — or were it some part of modern history you had recommended to my perusal, it would have made me somewhat wiser than before, but fallen infinitely short of the advantage I now enjoy. — These excellent volumes have let me into the very inmost recesses of nature, enlarged my ideas, and enabled me to behold, as the author himself expresses it,

— In

— In comprehensive thought,  
The vast extent 'twixt God and nought.

I AM ravished with the beauties of the creation, as it came from the hands of the *Almighty*; and am struck with the most reverential awe, when I consider the dreadful change it since has undergone by his just judgments on a sinful world:—I am no longer at a loss to account for what they call the wonders of the *Peak*;—nor for the inequality of the land, in some parts so stupendously mountainous, in others so low and marshy;—nor for those dismal caverns, which in many places seem to lead down even to the center of the earth; nor how these numberless little islands, torn as it were from the continent, came to be scattered up and down the sea:—These admirable books have shewn me, that all this was done by the force of those waters, which being let loose by their Great Ruler, overwhelmed, broke in, and dislocated the once beauteous frame of nature.—Still beauteous indeed, but not so simply regular as in its antediluvian state.

HOWEVER, this satisfaction, great as it is, comes infinitely short of what the charming description given of the *millennium* affords:—O most incomparable *Mira!* might I presume to hope I should be one of the happy number admitted into that scene of bliss, I should in theory be already there; anticipate my paradise, and while environed with a thousand impertinences, which eternally spring up amidst this vale of misery and folly, feel in my breast the untainted joys of heaven;—to live a thousand years divested of all anxious cares, all griefs, secured

from disappointments, as from vain pursuits, and idle wishes;—to be certain, that neither pain nor sickness can annoy us more;—to know we have passed the gulph of death;—escaped all the horrors of the grave; are out of the reach of those evil and malicious spirits, who watch to seize the flying soul, and are safely landed on that shore, where all is love and harmony;—where the author of our redemption reigns in person, over a world, which is all one great palace, and all who enter there are of his court.

How enchanting is the idea!—How glorious the prospect!—How flattering to hope! But, who, in these later ages, alas! dare venture to indulge it?—the prophets,—the patriarchs,—the apostles,—the martyrs, who have suffered for the cause of righteousness, perhaps, will fill those happy seats, and leave no room for virtues of an inferior rank.

TELL me, dear madam, do you think it possible for a person moderately good, and who wishes to be much more so, to be enlisted in this divine company? Will the purity of the intention, or the piety of the heart alone, without some distinguished act of zeal, be sufficient to entitle any one to a place in the first resurrection?

You see, madam, that though the admirable author of these books does not attempt to enforce the belief of his system, as a matter of faith, yet I am of the number of those, who are perfectly convinced of it:—But do not imagine I am so, merely because so great a man seems to be of that opinion himself; I do assure you I have



have examined those texts of holy writ, which he has quoted for that purpose, and find them so conformable to his way of expounding, especially those in the Revelations of St. *John*, that I cannot think it is in the power of human learning to put any other construction upon them.

YET, plain as it appears to me, I find some people treat it as visionary, and only the effects of a too warm, and fertile fancy; but sceptics there will always be in things of yet greater consequence to our salvation;—as such I look on these, and shall not waver in my belief of the doctor's position, till I hear better proofs against it, than any he has brought in defence of it.

FAVOUR me, I beseech you, madam, with your sentiments on this occasion, the first moment you have to bestow on her, who is, with the greatest respect, madam,

Your most obedient servant,

URANIA.



EPISTLE CXIII.

[ *The answer.* ]

From MIRA to URANIA, praising her comprehensive fine genius, and encouraging her to hope every thing she wished for on so laudable a score.

My dear URANIA,

I AM delighted beyond measure to find you are so highly sensible of the value of the work I sent you:—It shews you have a soul capable of receiving the most delicate impressions of philosophy, as well

as I always knew you had of religion:—Contemplation on the Divine Being, and the wonders of his providence, is the most seraphic employment of the mind, and brings us the nearest to the angelic nature:—Few things that have ever been wrote are better calculated to serve this sublime end; and I do not flatter you when I say, that few readers have a genius more adapted for improvement, and will do more honour to the author's labour.

I do not wonder, however, that you are more charmed with that part of his book, which relates to the *millennium*, than with any of the preceding ones, because people are naturally more inclined to give attention to that which is to come, than that which is past, though never so curious and interesting:—When next I have the pleasure of seeing you, shall enter into some discourse with you, and give you what observations I have made on his account of the paradisaical world, and the strange revolution occasioned by the deluge, but at present will not interrupt those rapturous meditations the *millennium* I perceive has filled you with.

AND to shew you how much I approve the credit you give to this enchanting system, dare venture to assure you, that when death has unlocked the adamantine gates, and brought futurity to view, you have no reason to despond of being one of those who shall partake of the felicities our author describes in the *millennium*: Fear not, my dear *Urania*, that because you have not been endowed with the gift of prophecy, nor have sustained the fiery trial of martyrdom, you have no pretensions to be admitted

a denizon in that happy place ; — much less need you be under any apprehensions for the want of room : — Our Blessed Saviour has, doubtless, already marked out his chosen train, and will measure out his new *Jerusalem* proportionable to the number of its inhabitants ; — we have only to prepare ourselves properly for a reception there, and take care we do not, like the foolish virgins, have our lamps to trim, when we are called upon to enter.

THE ardent zeal you express for being one of that select band, will certainly keep you always ready ; nor will you, when death, the harbinger of the joys you wish for, knocks at your door, and bids you haste away, be at any loss to put on those ornaments, which are necessary for your suitable appearance. I am so confident of your diligence in this point, that all remonstrances may be spared, and I shall, therefore, add nothing farther on the subject.

WHEN you have well digested these volumes, I have another for your perusal, which, to a person of your speculative turn of mind, cannot but be extremely agreeable. It is wrote by the same author, and entitled, *The state of departed souls* : — You will there see the true meaning of the word *hades*, or what we call hell, with many other curious explanations concerning eternity. — These are things too obtruse for every capacity, but I know yours, that you have read *Origen*, and are in no danger of falling into those errors which mislead the vulgar.

I LONG to see you, that I may talk freely on these matters ; and flatter myself, that my telling



you so will hasten your return to *London*: Farewel, my dear *Urania*; may we long enjoy the society of each other on earth, and meet hereafter in doctor *Burnet's millennium*; till when, I am, with the greatest sincerity, madam,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

MIRA.



### EPISTLE CXIV.

*From MIRA to SEMANTHE, on that lady having seemed to accuse herself of weakness, for having been terrified with the late shock of an earthquake.*

Dear SEMANTHE,



O contend with heaven, to brave the bolts of offended justice, and bid defiance to Divine Wrath, is a false piece of heroism:—Had I heard you had unmoved bore so terrible a shock, I should have bewailed your insensibility, not applauded your courage:—For my own part, I am far from being ashamed to confess, that I no sooner felt the tremendous convulsion of every thing about me, than I fell prostrate on that earth, which, for aught I knew, would immediately open and swallow me alive: I cried for protection to the Almighty Being who alone could give it me:—That Great Supreme! in whose hands are all the corners of the universe, who, when he pleases, can crush the worlds he has made, and all within them, into their original *chaos*.

You have sometimes been pleased to ask my  
advice,

advice, and have flattered me with acquiescing to my opinion in every thing;—do it then in this, my dear *Semanthe*, and cease to make any attempts to repel that reverential awe, which true piety inspires, for every thing that seems sent by heaven to warn us of our transgressions. What though the poet says,

*The truly innocent stand safe amidst  
The crack of nature, and the crush of worlds;*

Who is it that can boast so perfect a virtue as never to have done any thing which might provoke Divine Vengeance?—The very thinking so would be a crime, which would require all heaven's mercy to forgive.—I hope there are none guilty of so impious a presumption.

BUT there are others, who, though they assign a far less guilty pretence for their insensibility of fear in this, and other such-like dreadful events, I cannot but look upon highly to be blamed:—I mean those, who ascribing every thing that happens to natural causes, will not allow there are any indications of the wrath of an offended deity, except that which every man feels in his own bosom, in a consciousness of having done a bad action.

AMONG other causes which I have heard assigned for the late earthquake, by those who call themselves the rationalists, one is, that the planet *Jupiter*, in his passage through the *Zodiac*, came so near the earth, that the percussion of his atmosphere occasioned the shock which so much alarmed us.—Whether there be any thing in this position, I am not astronomer enough

to take upon me to decide; but I should think, had it been so, the trembling would have been more general than it seems by the accounts we have of it.

BUT be that as it may, can any one, but an atheist, deny, that *Jupiter*, and every other star, all that is in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, are under direction of an over-ruling Providence? Is not all nature actuated by the God of nature?—Who then but must tremble at the irregularity in those things which were created in the most perfect order.

YES, *Semanthe*, heaven, like a tender parent, menaces before it gives the blow:—It is in us alone to avert impending vengeance, by a timely penitence and submission.—I am sorry to hear so many people, for some of whom I have a great regard, and a good-will for all, were at the play and masquerade on a night succeeding that day of terror:—Those who had a true sense of it would certainly have employed their time in a very different manner. I am, with the most perfect amity,

Yours, &c.

MIRA.



EPISTLE





## EPISTLE CXV.

From SOPHRONIA, to a gentleman, who was going to marry his daughter to a man of the most dissolute behaviour, debauched principle, and ill-nature, only because he had promised her to him, before he was well acquainted with his character.



T was with an astonishment equal to the concern I feel in every thing relating to your family, that I heard, in spite of all the vices *Lisario* is known to be guilty of, you are determined to give your daughter to him;—He has your promise, it is certain, but then you made that promise when he maintained a character to justify your choice:—You knew not then, nor did the world imagine, he would return from his travels the abandoned wretch he is:—Must then the young, the fair, the innocent *Violetta*, fall the victim of a too nice point of honour in him who has the disposal of her!—Must she be condemned to lasting misery, by the very person, who is bound by all the laws of heaven and nature, to do every thing in his power to protect her from it!—Must she be the prey of vice and folly, only because it should not be said, you broke your word!—Is this to be a father? Is it not rather the effect of tyranny, than paternal affection? Pardon, Sir, the freedom which our long friendship emboldens me to take, and believe I *speak* no more than what all *think*, who know what you are about to do, and which if you carry into

completion, cannot but draw on you that very censure you seem so fearful of incurring.

To be strictly tenacious of one's word, is certainly a most praise-worthy quality, yet the *Cassuists* will tell you, the extreme of any *virtue* borders on a *vice*:—Many instances might be produced to prove, there may be promises, which it is less a fault to break than to keep; and sure, if any are to be dispensed with, yours made to *Lisario* is so.

Of two evils, they say, we ought to chuse the least; and if you should think it a greater, to chuse to retract a promise made to one, who is no longer the same man he was at the time of your making it, than to sacrifice a most deserving child to certain wretchedness, I am afraid it will be esteemed rather a fullen obstinacy than real honour in you.

THE more the charming maid resigns herself to your will, the more careful you should be to will nothing that did not afford a probability of turning to her advantage: Enjoin her not, therefore, I conjure you, Sir, to an action, which must not only be the entire destruction of her peace, but may also drive her to a despair fatal to her morals, and make her curse the obedience by which she is undone.

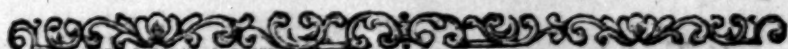
I MIGHT enumerate the many mischiefs which attend a union between persons so opposite in their principles and humours as *Violetta* and *Lisario*, but your own good sense and observation render it needless:—I only beg you will seriously reflect upon the consequences which may ensue, before

before you tie that irrevocable knot, which death, or somewhat worse than death, only can dissolve.

—I am, with an unfeigned regard, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

SOPHRONIA.



EPISTLE CXVI.

*From ASTREA to EUPHROSINE, with the sequel of the story of PHILANDER and ALTEZEERA.*

*My dear EUPHROSINE,*

**I** NOW write to you with double satisfaction, having it in my power, at last, to present you with the sequel of an adventure, which I know your good nature must be very much interested in, though not yet acquainted with any of the persons concerned in it.

I HAD but just finished my last letter to you, and two or three other dispatches I was obliged to send to *London*, when *Philander* came into my chamber, and with a transport of joy told me, that his dear *Altezeera* was so much better, that she believed herself able to give an account of the accident that had befallen her, but would not do it till I was present:—This so overjoyed me, that I did not stay to congratulate him on the occasion, but ran hastily into the room where she was; he followed with an equal degree of speed, and we were no sooner seated by her bedside, than she began with a voice more audible than I could have imagined, to address herself to us in the following terms:



“IT has been no small addition to the pains I have felt, that you, madam, and my dear *Philander*, should so long be kept in ignorance concerning the manner by which I was reduced to the condition I was found in, and relieved by the generous pity of yourself, and your noble brother.

“THE beginning of my history I know *Philander* has already made you acquainted with; it only remains for me to tell you, that the night before that appointed for my escape, just as I was going into bed, I heard the accustomed signal under my window:—I was very much surprized, but looking out, found it was indeed *Philander's* servant; on which I hastily let down the string, supposing he had brought a letter:—*Madam*, said he, *my master had no time to write, an accident has happened that requires your immediate removal;—no time is to be lost;—make haste therefore to descend;—he has prepared a chariot, in which he waits for you at a convenient distance.* I had no suspicion of the truth of what he said, but ran back to fetch the ladder of ropes he had before conveyed to me:—While I was fixing it, *Have you got your jewels, madam*, cried he; *I have none here*, answered I:—*That is unlucky*, replied he, *but no matter.* By this time I was got down;—he was on horseback,—he took me up before him, and we rode, I believe, near a mile, without speaking a word, till coming to the great road, I asked him where *Philander* was,—*a little farther off*, answered he, and with these words clapped spurs to his horse, which galloped with us at such a furious rate, that I had no breath to speak.

“I THOUGHT we were now far enough from  
the

the place where I had been confined, and began to wonder I did not see *Philander*:—Our pace being a little slackened, I asked where he was, and added, I hoped he had not mistaken the road where the chariot was to meet us:—*No, no*, replied this monster, *you are nearer to your lover than you imagine.*

“I WAS that instant, continued she, seized with a terror, which I could not then account for, nor am able to describe:—I threw my eyes round in search of what I so much wished to see, but though I might have discerned objects at a great distance, the moon shining very bright, nothing presented itself to me but a dreary waste, over which we passed, and came to the entrance of a wood:—Here it was the villain stopped, and still holding me in his arms, dismounted:—He made me sit down on a kind of bank, while he tied his horse by the bridle to a tree; *Now*, said he, *you will immediately be in possession of the most faithful and passionate of all lovers.*—O where is he? cried I, endeavouring to penetrate into the thickness of the wood; *Why comes he not to ease my trembling heart?*—*Here, here he is*, replied that most execrable of all traitors, and at the same time throwing himself down by me, *behold in me your faithful adorer*;—*Philander loves you not*,—*he has resigned his title to you, and you are mine by his gift, and I hope will be so by your own free will, when you shall be convinced how much I adore you.*

“THE astonishment and terror I was in at the beginning of this infamous declaration, left me not the power of interrupting it, till he attempting to close it with a kiss:—Rage got the better of the more timid passions, and giving him a  
blow

blow with all my force upon the face, *Most impudent of all villains*, cried I, *what devil has prompted thee to this behaviour?* Your beauty, answered he, *and the commands of him that was once my master*:—*Thou liest*, said I, half choaked with indignation, and endeavouring to rise, but alas! all the strength I could muster up, was feeble, when opposed to his:—He had me fast within his grasp, and compelled me to sit still and hear the odious arguments he had prepared to work me to his will:—He told me, that sensible of the many inconveniencies that attend marriage without the consent of friends, and besides having the offer of a more suitable match, that *Philander* had resolved to quit me;—on which he said he had acquainted you with the secret passion he had for me;—that you advised him to pursue it; and directed him in the means he now had taken as the most likely for accomplishing his purpose.

“*THINK* not, my generous benefactress, nor you, my dear *Philander*, (she went on) that I believed one syllable of what this wretch had uttered, but the different passions of fear and anger warring in my breast, prevented me for some time from saying any thing in contradiction to his falsehoods:—He added, that though reduced to be a servant, through the ill management of his parents, he was descended of a good family, had a little knowledge of commerce, and as I had a fortune independant of my father, he would carry me to *Holland*, and lay it out in such merchandize, as he should find would turn to the best account; so that, said he, throwing his hateful arms about my neck, *I doubt not but by my industry, you may be one day no less rich, and infinitely*



*initely more happy, than you could have been, in being the wife of Philander.*

“HAD I been mistress of the least presence of mind, I should certainly have flattered the villain’s hopes, have seemed to give credit to his allegations, made a shew of consent to his desires, and suffered him to conduct me on the journey he mentioned, till we had arrived at some place where I might safely have discovered my disdain, proclaimed his treachery, and applied for the protection of justice:—Believing himself secure of me, he then would, perhaps, have treated me with respect, and I had escaped the insults he soon after had the insolence, and the cruelty to offer:—But in that dreadful juncture, my senses were all confused, and lost:—I had no reflection,—no contrivance,—no thought, but to find proper words wherewith to express my abhorrence of his person, and attempt.—This so irritated him, that he plainly told me, if I would not be his in the honourable way he had proposed, I should be so by one which should make me hereafter repent my pride and folly, that he had not proceeded so far without a resolution to stop at nothing; and that he was not of a humour to be checked by the vain threats of a weak silly woman.

“THESE words were followed by actions, which left me no room to doubt the horrid intention of his soul; my modesty, alas! suffered but too many indignities, and it was heaven alone that sure enabled me to repel the last of violations;—all my stock of strength, however, was near exhausted, and I was very near being rendered the most wretched of my sex, when I

was

was relieved by the most unexpected, and, indeed, unhopèd-for means.

“ JUST as I was on the brink of ruin, the sudden trampling of horses at some distance made the villain start, and pause in the execution of his purpose :—This interruption also gave me time and breath to send forth a loud shout, in hopes of drawing those persons, whoever they were, to my rescue :—He still kept listening, but stopped my mouth with his hand so close, that I could make little or no sound ;—I used my utmost efforts, however, for that purpose, which he perceiving, and at the same time, imagining the persons he heard was coming that way, perhaps also they were in pursuit of himself, to prevent being taken, and in revenge for his disappointment, he drew his hanger, and gave me two wounds, holding the other hand still over my mouth ; after which he set his foot upon my breast, doubtless to dispatch me with the more speed, then mounted his horse, and rode away with an incredible swiftness,

“ MY intended ravisher being gone, as I might well be assured, by his last usage of me, with no thoughts of returning, I made no efforts to call the strangers, whom I still heard, to my assistance, not doubting by the pains I felt, but I had received a mortal wound, and also not being sure but I might fall into as bad hands as his I had just escaped.—I therefore lay quite still till they were past, which they did without taking any notice of me ;—they were three in number, and seemed earnest in discourse ; but on what subject, or what business bent, my agonies prevented me from discovering :—You may

may suppose, indeed, I had little curiosity to know.

“ I WILL not trouble you with any description of the agonies with which my mind accompanied those of my body ; — you may judge in the dying condition I then thought myself, they must be as terrible as human nature could sustain, but I cannot forbear saying, that the apprehensions I had, that the wicked wretch had murdered his master, were not the least tormenting.

“ MY wounds bled very fast, and I can impute my not fainting quite away, only to the excessive pain I felt from the hurt in my breast, the monster having set his foot just in the place where a little picture of *Philander's* was concealed within my stays.

“ DAY at last broke ; the weather was extremely sultry, which, joined to the great loss of blood I had sustained, got the better of my anguish, and I fell into a kind of swoon : How long I lay in that condition, I know not, but the first objects that presented themselves to my returning senses, were you, good madam, and your noble brother : Let me call you the guardian angels of my life, my honour, my peace, my happiness, and my love.”

HERE *Altezeera* ended the narrative we had so long and so impatiently wished to hear, which I would not detain your attention from, by any repetition of the many interruptions, which the violent emotions *Philander* was in at some parts of it, forced him to give, during the recital.



*Altezeera* herself was so much fatigued with holding so long a discourse, and also with the various agitations which the remembrance of what had passed raised in her, that even *Philander* himself, loth as he was to leave her presence, judged it necessary we should retire, in order that she might take some repose.

WE went down stairs into the parlour, where we found my brother just come in:—He seemed more pensive than ordinary, but before we had time to ask him the cause of it, he surprized us with a piece of intelligence we little expected.

HE told us, that having been at \*\*\*\* town, which you know is but six miles off this house, he had been informed, that an old gentleman, accompanied by three others, and attended by several servants, were all lodged at an inn, and were coming the next morning to him, to apply for an authority to search the county for a young lady, who had for some time been missing, and they imagined was concealed in some house or other in these parts.

BY the description, said my brother, *this can be no other than the father of Altezeera*; and, if so, it would be mean and base in me to grant authority for the troubling other people's houses with a fruitless search after a person, whom I concealed in my own:—Besides, added he, I could not answer to myself the imposing on a gentleman of his character and figure in the world.

*Philander* turned pale at hearing my brother speak in this manner, fearing he intended to give up *Altezeera* to her father, and they should again  
be

be separated :—Indeed I was a little surprized myself, considering the sweetness of his temper, and the friendship which she had conceived for *Philander* in this short time of their acquaintance.

BUT he soon eased the suspense we both were in, by continuing his discourse in this manner : *I see no way, said he, either honourable for myself, or that can secure the possession of Altezera to Philander, but by an immediate marriage ;—to which, if they both agree, I will have the pleasure of giving her hand to him, whom I am convinced deserves it, and my own chaplain shall perform the sacred ceremony.—A husband's power abrogates that of a father, and his affection will not attempt to disannul what Providence seems to have designed.*

NEVER did I behold any transport come up to that, which *Philander* expressed on this occasion ;—he threw himself upon my brother's neck, —called him his patron,—his preserver, and gave him all the tender epithets that gratitude could invent :—The first raptures of his satisfaction being over, he began to express some fears, that *Altezera* would not, in her present weak condition, be prevailed on to agree to this proposal ; but I undertook to bring it about, on which we all retired to our respective chambers, having resolved, that very early in the morning the nuptials should be solemnized : Before I went to bed, I ordered the woman, who attended *Altezera*, to call me on her first waking.

ACCORDINGLY, about four o'clock in the morning, the woman came to my bedside, and told me, that the lady, after a very refreshing sleep, was now awake, and had called for something

thing to drink; on which I rose, got on my cloaths with all the speed I could, and went into her chamber:—She seemed very much amazed at seeing me so early, but I soon told her what my errand was, and found no difficulty to persuade her to follow the scheme my brother had proposed.

THIS done, I sent to awaken my brother, *Philander*, the chaplain, the house-keeper, and butler, thinking it necessary they should be witnesses to the marriage.

*PHILANDER*, I suppose, had not slept since I last saw him, for I had no sooner sent the summons than he entered the room;—my brother and the rest came in a short time, and the chaplain being told what he was to do, performed, between *Philander* and *Altezeera*, those mystic rites, which constitute the matrimonial union.

THIS, however, with the thoughts of her father's near approach, and the upbraidings she expected from the first fury of his resentment, made *Altezeera* somewhat disordered, and it was as much as all of us could do to inspire her with courage to face the storm.

It was not more than seven, when my brother was told some gentlemen below desired to speak with him on an extraordinary affair: This intelligence almost threw *Altezeera* into her cold fit again, but I left *Philander* to comfort her, and went down into a little room adjacent to that my brother always received company in on these occasions, and where I could distinctly hear all that



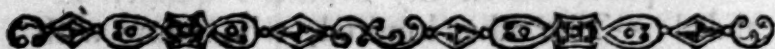
that passed;—I soon found it was indeed the father, the brother, and the two other relations of *Altezeera's*, who were there:—They were beginning to address him in the usual form for what they wanted, but he presently told them, that they might spare themselves the trouble of any farther search, for the lady they were in quest of, was at that time a guest with her husband in his house:—The father flew into extreme rage at the word husband;—*What, is she married?* cried he, *the audacious hussy!* 'tis to *Philander* then, I suppose!—my brother answered in the affirmative, and was beginning to say some good-natured things in behalf of that gentleman, and the choice she had made; but the unreasonably incensed father would listen to nothing on that score, nor be prevailed upon even to see *Altezeera*, or *Philander*;—he swore she never should have a shilling from him, and that instead of a blessing, he would load her with his eternal curses.—No arguments my brother could make use of had the power to bring him to more moderation:—He even forgot good manners, and run out of the house without paying those respects which my brother's quality demanded:—The other kindred, who came with him, were more polite;—the brother of *Altezeera*, so often mentioned in my former letters on this subject, stayed a little behind the others, and, in as brief terms as he could, begged pardon for his father's abrupt behaviour;—thanked him for the favours he found had been conferred by him on his sister and *Philander*,—entreated he would commend him to them, and let them know, he would neglect nothing that might mitigate their father's indignation.—

POOR *Altezeera* was very much affected on hearing this detail, though we concealed from her the worst part of what her cruel father had said :—She received, however, some consolation in a few hours ;—the generous *Ormusia* took an opportunity of sending a letter to her from the inn, before they set out on their return for *London* ; he repeated in it what he had said to my brother, and added, that he was very confident his intercession, with that of other friends, would soon bring about a reconciliation.

I HAVE nothing now farther to acquaint you with, my dear *Euphrosine*, than that as soon as *Altezeera* has perfectly recovered her health, we shall all come to *London* together, and you will then see a pair of lovers, who have suffered enough for each other, to bring constancy into fashion again :—Farewel,—I have wrote you a book instead of a letter, and have no time to add any thing concerning myself, but that I am, dear creature,

Sincerely yours,

ASTREA.



### EPISTLE CXVII.

From *MIRA* to *URANIA*, on the second terrible shock of an earthquake, felt on the 8th of March.

**G**AIN, my dear *Urania*, has all-gracious heaven vouchsafed to warn a sinful world of what it ought to expect :—Again has the Almighty, like a tender parent, shook the rod before the blow is

is given, which, when it once descends, excludes repentance; as I remember to have somewhere read,

*The years of our probation past,  
All future prayers and penitence are vain.  
By the irrevocable fiat doom'd  
To never-ending bliss or woe,  
Both hopes and fears in certainty are lost.*

WE can die but once, indeed, and if well prepared, ought not to be too anxious in what manner we make our exit hence:—But the pleasures and temptations of this world are too alluring, alas! for the generality of people, wholly to resist:—How many, perhaps, full of the memory of the enchanting entertainments of the preceding evening, forgot to recommend themselves to the Divine Protection, before they yielded to that image of death, sleep? How many were negligent of paying their duty to the Deity, by forming schemes in what manner they should pass the next day, what visits they must return, and with what new diversion they should kill time?—How many were guilty of the same omission, through the anxious cares which penury excites?—Much are these last to be pitied, though not excused; but, O *Urania*, what shall we say, what can we think of those, who, even in the instant of that dreadful shock, were by it interrupted in planning new arts of oppression, who were that moment plotting designs pernicious to society.

*The sly projector, (who designs to build  
His fortune on his neighbour's, or, perchance,  
His country's ruin,—'tis alike to him*

*If*



*If individual, or whole nations sink,  
Wakes with the dawn, nor tastes a morning's  
slumber.*

OTHERS, less hurtful to mankind, but unjust and cruel to themselves, lay drowned in lust and wine, and fatigued with the last night's debauch, were rock'd in so profound a sleep, as not to be awaked by the tremendous shock.—A shock, which, had not infinite mercy interposed, might have buried all the inhabitants of our metropolis under the ruins of their city.

WHAT shall I say then to the bold impious man, who would rob the Almighty of Power, nor till he feels his vengeance, will be convinced he takes any cognizance of what is done below; such I tremble for indeed!

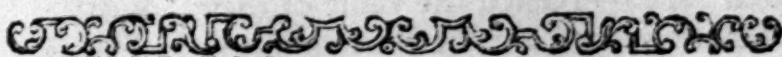
BUT this accident, as I before observed, in its most dreadful effects, could but have anticipated our fate, and done what nature, some time or other, will do without it;—no more than a thousand other casualties, of a less dreaded kind, might possibly have brought about:—Death, therefore, in itself, is not the proper object of a wise man's fear, it is inevitable; but there is a great difference between a slow or sudden death, as it may relate to the happiness or misery of an immortal soul which is to survive the body, and may humbly expect favour in proportion to its repentance. I cannot therefore call it heroism in any man, to say, that it matters not whether he dies of a consumption, or is swallowed up in an earthquake.—Let us reflect, that when national transgressions have called down national chastisements, forced long-neglected

neglected *mercy* from her seat, and all is left to *justice*, at that tribunal, who dare expect to be acquitted!

PRAYERS and humiliations can alone avert the menaced stroke, and those I hope will not be omitted.—I am, with a confusion of mind, too great for words to describe,

My dear *Urania*,  
Yours, &c.

MIRA.



EPISTLE CXVIII.

*From STELLA in London, to her sister in Paris, returning her thanks for the present she had received from her, and acquainting her with the use she had made of it.*

*My dear sister,*

 HIS brings you my most grateful acknowledgments for the fine head, ruffles, and tippet, you were so kind to send me by the hands of \*\*\*\*.—Never had I seen any thing so curious, and beautiful, as the work; and that which added to my admiration of it was, that he assured me it was wrought by the hands of a recluse, of the order of *St. Augustine*, and sold for the relief of the poor. All who saw have been charmed with it, and you may be sure, I shewed it to as many as came near me.—I could not help trying the head, the ruffles, and tippet, the very next day after they were in my possession, to see how they be-

came me ; and thought they very much contributed to heighten the few graces nature had bestowed upon me.—By what I have said, I doubt not, but you will think I could not rest in this new equipage without visiting all the public places in town.—Were I the same gay, vain thing, I was when you left *London*, this conjecture would have been just ; but, my dear sister, I am now, thank heaven, another creature, and you must not take it ill of me when I tell you, I wore them but for a moment, and have put it out of my power to make any use of them a second time.—I asked the value of them, of those who are judged the best connoisseurs in *French point*, and they assured me, that they could not cost less than a thousand livres, where they were bought ; but were here worth double that sum.

ON considering seriously of this matter, I found it inconsistent with the duties owing from me to my fellow creatures, to feed a senseless pride in myself, with what would afford ease to the hardships so many of them laboured under.—*This curious lace, said I to myself, a pin, or twenty accidents, may tear.—It may be mildewed, or spoiled in washing ; or, if none of these happen, the very fineness of the thread will render it of short duration.—Linnen of a far less price, will as well answer the end of apparel, keep me more warm, look as decent, though less attract the admiration, and perhaps the envy, of the beholders.*

IN fine, I disposed of it for a hundred and twenty pounds, to lady *Fanny* :—Both of us thought ourselves happy by having made this bargain.—She went to court, and plumed herself in being the finest lady there :—I to the prisons,



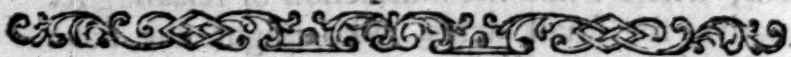
sions, where I had the satisfaction of releasing six captives for small debts, who might else have perished there. — This took not up more than half the sum, so the remaining part I distributed among people whose wants were known to me.

THE prayers and blessings of those I have relieved are greater, and more lasting ornaments, than any that art or fancy can supply me with; and I doubly thank you, my dear sister, for affording me the means of doing what my niggard fortune would otherwise have denied me.

THUS you see, the effects of the pious nun's handywork have extended themselves much farther than she could have expected, by relieving the poor in *London*, as well as those in *Paris*, at which, I dare answer, she would not be offended, did the knowledge of it reach her; nor will you, I flatter myself, judge with less candour of the use I have made of your very obliging present. — To convince me, however, that you will do so, I beg you will send me a lock of your hair, as also one of that most worthy person, who, you inform me, is now my brother; but I desire to have it as it comes off your heads, — not set, nor ornamented. — I know a poor, but ingenious jeweller, whom it is a kind of charity to employ. — I shall make it into a locket for my breast, where I shall always wear it, to shew how dear you are, and ever will be, to

Your affectionate sister,

STELLA.



## EPISTLE CXIX.

*From EUSEBIA to SOPHRONIA, giving her the  
account of the death of CLOTILDA.*

*My dear friend,*

 Come now from being a witness of the most solemn and interesting scene, that nature can present.—I mean that of death:—The death of the once gay *Clotilda*:—A woman, who could not be called vicious, nor yet wholly virtuous.—The extremes of good and ill were so mingled in her constitution, that the one was for the most part hindered from exerting itself, and the other moderated by its opposite;—so that it might be said, that in the general her life was an insipid blank.—Reason seemed bestowed on her for no other purpose, than to enable her to talk, and write well; it never had any sway over her actions:—They were influenced by mere propensity, and according as the praise-worthy, or blameable passions were predominant, was her conduct and behaviour:—Pleased or angry,—melancholly or chearful, without a cause:—Her civilities,—her disdain,—her love,—her hate,—were all the effect of caprice, and never of long continuance; so that her friendship was little to be valued, or her enmity feared.—Unhappy woman!—whatever *good* she did lost all its merit, because not directed by judgment; and the *ill* was censured with the more severity, even on that very score, which ought rather to have

have excused it:—So quick-sighted are the generality of people to the faults of others!—As the poet truly says,

*All see my spots, but few my brightness take.*

Clotilda, it is certain, might have been a shining ornament to her sex, had she made a proper use of those talents she received from nature; had she more early examined into herself, and remembered, that where much was given, much would be expected, she would, doubtless, have avoided all those mistakes, which some have so severely censured:—Had she cherished those divine emanations, which by starts inspired her mind, she might have never once wandered from those paths which led to virtue, fame, and everlasting happiness.—But, alas! the power of reflection came to her too late, to retrieve her reputation in this world, tho', I hope, not for her remission in the next.

In her last sickness, she desired I would be with her as often as I could,—I was so, and tho' I was sorry to find her distemper increased every day, so as to have her life despaired of, yet I rejoiced to find her nobler part, her soul, in a more healthy disposition than it had ever been.—She joined with me in prayers, and the most grateful praises, to the Divine Being, for giving her this warning of her approaching fate;—confessed to me, with tears of mingled shame and grief, many errors, which, till then, I was ignorant she had been guilty of; but ever and anon cried out, *I hate,—I despise myself for my past follies: Yet, O my dear Eusebia! how can I be certain, that were I to recover from this sickness,*



*I should not act them over again?—I know not my own heart, nor how far my present resolution might be depended upon:—I think myself a sincere penitent;—but what!—O what, if I am deceived, will then become of me?*

PERCEIVING she was ready to fall into despair, I comforted her the best I was able, and had the satisfaction to find her, at length, perfectly composed, and trusting to Divine Mercy.—She expired in my arms, and her last breath issued with a kind of angelic smile.—Farewel, dear *Sophronia*, my tears will permit me to add no more, than that I am, sincerely,

Yours, &c.

EUSEBIA.

*End of the TENTH BOOK.*



EPISTLES



# EPISTLES.

---

## BOOK XI.

---

### EPISTLE CX.

*From MIRA to AURELIA, concerning the manner in which she educates her daughter, and blaming her for laying somewhat of a too great restraint upon her.*

*My dear AURELIA,*



FLATTER myself you are too well convinced of the sincerity of my friendship, to imagine what I am about to say is dictated by any ill-nature, or a desire of finding somewhat to condemn in the conduct of those for whom I profess a regard; I shall therefore make no apology for telling you, that though in most things you come as near perfection as woman can do, yet in *one* you are guilty of an error, which may open a door to let in that very misfortune you are most careful to avoid.—I know you to be kind and indulgent to those over whom you have command;—faithful to those you call your friends;—a tender, affectionate wife, and make it your study to be the best of mothers.—But, alas! it is in this last article you fail:—You start, perhaps, at an accusation

which may seem to you so unjust.—You will reply, that you have nothing to do with the education of your son, and that you have early instructed your daughter in the principles of virtue and religion;—that you have given her all the accomplishments becoming her sex and rank, and have omitted nothing in your power for forming her mind, so as to know how to behave well through every stage of life:—All this I grant;—and, moreover, that you keep a most vigilant eye over all her words and behaviour, so as to prevent her from having any knowledge of, or acquaintance with, the modish fopperies of the present age; and above all, that nothing which has the least tendency to flattery shall ever reach her ears; and here it is I think you are in the wrong; not that I would encourage any thing that might raise the seeds of vanity, that bane to virtue, in a female heart; and were you certain of having it always in your power to defend that of *Corinna* from it, she would be blest indeed, and the caution you use in this point could never be too much extolled.—But, my dear *Aurelia*, consider with yourself, how almost impossible this is;—that, in spite of all your care, some accident may happen to lay her open to the snares which are always spread for innocence:—Some gay and self-sufficient coxcomb may find an opportunity of addressing her with all the rhetoric of pretended passion; and such discourses being new to her, how can she be prepared to answer as she ought!—Believe me, when a young girl, who has never been treated otherwise than as she really is made by nature, finds herself all at once erected into a goddess, she is too apt, if not to imagine herself such, to think her worshipper does so: Whereas  
those

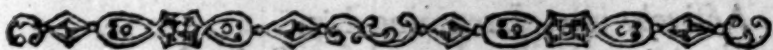


those more accustomed to be entertained with such fooleries, treat them with the contempt they merit, and think no more of them when past.—For this reason, I cannot approve of a boarding-school education for girls of condition;—a convent is much better, provided they avoid the superstitions of the place; because they are used to gallantry at the grate, from young gentlemen who take pleasure in entertaining the nuns, and are no strangers to the world when they come into it.—In a word, too much restraint is as dangerous as too much liberty.—Let, therefore, the young *Corinna* see something of the humours of the town:—I am confident, the more she is acquainted with what you so carefully hide from her, the more her good sense, and the excellent rudiments you have given her, will teach her to despise it.—I have much to add on this subject, but company prevents me, and I must defer what I have farther to say till another opportunity; and, in the mean time, am,

Dear *Aurelia*,

Yours, &c.

MIRA.



## EPISTLE CXXI.

*From EUPHROSINE to MIRA, with some verses that lady had desired her to procure a copy of.*

Dear madam,



Every request you vouchsafe to make, ought to have all the force of a command, especially with me, I have never ceased teasing *Ardella* to permit me to transcribe those verses you have expressed a desire

of seeing, and have at last obtained her leave, tho' they are closed with what she thinks so high a compliment to herself, that I could perceive her modesty suffered a good deal in granting what I asked.—You have here enclosed a faithful copy, and I rejoyce in this, as I shall do in every opportunity of testifying, that nothing can afford me so much pride and pleasure, as the means of retaliating, tho' it be only in trifles, some of the great and unnumbered obligations your partial friendship has conferred upon me.—I have the honour to be, madam,

Your ladyship's most devoted servant,

EUPHROSINE.

*A POEM, inclosed in the foregoing.*

T H E

V I S I O N.

Inscribed to the incomparable ARDELLA.

**S**TRETCH'D on the grassy margin of a brook,  
Whose murm'ring fellowship my mind par-  
took,  
Actively idle, I repining lay,  
Gaz'd on the flood, and sigh'd the stream away.

Who knows, I cry'd, what course thou hast  
to pass,  
Sweet stream! that now creep'st softly thro' this  
grass!  
How may'st thou flow anon?—Perhaps, slid hence;  
Thy deep'ning channel fills some moated fence,  
Hems in some farms, where homely rusticks meet,  
And their sweet bread, prize of hard labour, eat;  
Thence to some lord's delightful garden led,  
Thou

Thou may'st thy vegetative influence spread,  
 Where, as thro' fragrant beds, thy purlings slide,  
 The grateful flow'rs shall kiss 'em as they glide.  
 Here, charm'd and ling'ring, thou may'st wish  
     to stay,  
 And hoarsely murm'ring roll, displeased, away.

NEXT, may thy silver current's brightness die,  
 And muddily some stagnate fen supply,  
 Where shadowy reeds in thy flow streams shall  
     shake,  
 And floods fly trembling from the gloom they  
     make.  
 Frighted and glad to 'scape this horrid place,  
 Thou may'st wind short, and new direct thy race  
 Through verdant meads, o'erjoy'd may'st dancing  
     go,  
 And cattle sip thy whirlpools as they flow.

GRAVE *Thames* may next receive thy mix'd  
     embrace,  
 And fam'd *Augusta* see thy sully'd face:  
 From her wash'd foot thy scatter'd flood may stray,  
 And in the swallowing ocean roll away:  
 There, wasted stream, in wind-driv'n billows tost,  
 Thy oft-chang'd being shall be wholly lost.  
 Even so, I cried, sweet stream! dies human life,  
 'Midst endless changes, and in endless strife,  
 Glide with impatience thro' unknown events,  
 Till nature asks repose, and death consents.

WHY then is such a life so much desir'd?  
 By what pursuits is vain ambition fir'd?  
*Friendship* is lost on earth, *love* goes astray,  
 And men, like beasts, each on the other prey.  
 Even the soft sex their downy bosoms hide  
 With inward artifice, or outward pride.



Nothing is now worth wishing for on earth,  
And death is grown a much less woe than birth.

WHILE thus I mus'd, back roll'd th' astonish'd brook,  
The trees bow'd down, the earth beneath me shook!

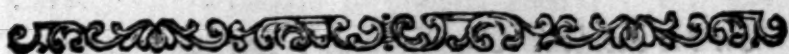
All heaven descended to the glowing ground,  
And radiant terror dazzling shone around!  
Blind with the strong refulgence, fix'd I lay,  
Buried in brightness, and o'erwhelm'd in day!  
When, lo! a sound broke out, — 'Impatient youth,  
' Listen, and mark the voice of sacred *truth*!  
' I come, continu'd she, to bring thee peace;  
' To bid thy diffidence in friendship cease.  
' Again to reconcile thee to mankind,  
' New wing thy transports, and unclog thy mind.  
' There lives a charmer, whom divinely fir'd,  
' Even her whole sex's virtues have inspir'd;  
' Where all that's manly, joins with all that's  
    ' sweet,  
' And in whose breast engross'd perfections meet:  
' Her mind no conscious pride of merit stains,  
' In her wide soul unsully'd vigour reigns,  
' Blind to her worth, she feels not her own flame,  
' Enriches merit, yet despises fame!

' HASTE then, and meet her, as she this way  
    ' strays,  
' And thy own wonder shall out-speak my praise.'

THE goddess vanish'd to her native skies,  
And th' uncover'd shade unbarr'd my eyes.  
I look'd, and lo! within the honour'd wood,  
Lovely *Ardella* hid in bay-leaves stood.  
*Ardella*! — but her wonders to reveal,  
Were to describe what I can only feel,

Now

Now reconcil'd to the shunn'd world I'll live,  
*Ardella*, joys worth living for, can give.



## EPISTLE CXXII.

*From EUPHROSINE to CLARISMONDA, on bearing she intended to take a voyage to Spain.*

*Dearest CLARISMONDA,*



T was with an infinity of surprize and grief, I heard from my brother, that on receipt of a letter from the consul, your uncle, you had resolved on going to *Spain*.—This visit, if you make it, I am certain will not be a short one ;—if we are so unhappy as to lose you, it will be for a long time ; perhaps, for ever. —You may marry there, or if not so, it is not to be doubted but that all manner of allurements will be prepared to engage your stay. I know you have many reasons not to be in love with *England* ;—that you have met with some treatment unworthy of you, or of the character of those from whom you received it ;—but yet, my dear, I must tell you, that it is not quite just, that those who love you, and are your sincere friends, should suffer for the faults of those whom envy, or ignorance of your merit, have made your enemies.

A POET of my acquaintance, and who is not altogether a stranger to you, happening to be with me when my brother brought in the unwelcome tidings, called immediately for pen and  
 paper,

paper, and wrote, extempore, the following lines, which I cannot forbear communicating to you, tho' I had not his permission.

*On the excellent Clarismonda's intending a voyage to Spain.*

*To Spain! forbid it heav'n! O wish no more  
To bless profusely that abounding shore!  
To souls, like thine, it can no pleasure yield,  
To waste manure on the too fertile field;  
Since Spain, high-treasured, grasps the golden west,  
O let thy Indies be by us possess'd.*

BUT I fear all he can write, or I can say, will be ineffectual to prevail, if you are indeed so much resolved, as my brother seems to think. — There is no way but one that I know of to deprive the *Dons* triumphing in our loss, and that is, by setting *Astrea* to argue you out of so cruel a design. — She will tell you, that no consideration whatever ought to make one prefer the good of any country to one's own, and tho' how unjustly soever we may have been treated by it, we are to bear every thing with patience, as a child from a parent, and, that the filial duty owing from us, to the land which gave us birth, can never be dispensed with: — But I will not go about to anticipate what she can say so much better. — I am no politician you know, and seldom meddle with the affairs of state; but I am so much an *English* woman, as not to endure the thoughts of *Clarismonda*, or *Gibraltar*, going out of our hands.

You see, as indolent as I seem, and really am, to most of the transitions of this world, I can be  
warm



warm on some occasions.—There is a certain public-spiritedness in my composition, which I was not sensible of, till the knowledge of your intentions awakened it in me, and I could not delay one moment writing to you some part of my sentiments, tho' I expect to see you to-morrow.—I hope nothing I have said will hinder you from coming, tho' I will not promise I shall be able to entertain you with any other topic of conversation.—I am, in the mean time, and always, my very dear *Clarismonda*,

Your most obedient servant,

EUPHROSINE.



EPISTLE CXXIII.

*From GLORIANA in the country, to LOTHARIO in town, on hearing he intended to take a journey, on purpose to visit her.*

*My lord,*



AM extremely obliged for the favour, I am told, you design me; but should be guilty of a great abuse of your good-nature, if I permitted you to take the pains of so long a journey, without acquainting you before-hand of the reception you will meet with at the end of it.

IN the first place, I must let your lordship know, that my sister being just married, I have resigned my house this summer season to the use of her and her husband, and having taken it into my head to study philosophy, am retired into

a little cell, for I can call it no better, which just holds myself, and my books, and belongs to a tenant of mine, whose farm-house is close to it, where all my servants, except a girl who lies at my bed's foot, are lodged.—I believe you never heard of a female hermit, nor even imagined there was such a thing; yet, if you are not deterred from coming by what I have said, and what I have still to say, you will find the truth of it in me.—I have already given you to understand, that you are to expect no better apartment than such as my tenant can accommodate you with, who, tho' he is a wealthy farmer, is quite a plain man, and infected with none of the modish fopperies which waste great part of the substance of those who live near to that source of destructive pride and vanity, *London*. You will be placed in a great wild room, without any other covering to the walls, than here and there an old family picture; and must be content to lie in a bed, the canopy of which is a brown cloath, plentifully pinked by the moths, and supported by the trunks of four large oaks, carved in the shape of the giants in *Guildhall*.—As for your eating, you will find a table about three yards long, spread every day with beef, mutton, and sometimes lamb, veal, poultry of several sorts, with great gammons of bacon, and bag-puddings in plenty;—but, for heaven's sake, do not let your appetite wander towards ragouts, fricassees, crawfish soup, pitty-patees, trouffles, morelles, and those *autre quelque chose*, in the serving up of which your cook so much excels.—The very names of these things would fright my honest farmer into exclamations:—*French*, nor indeed any sort of wine, you must not think of while you are here; but good *October* beer is never wanting:—Thus  
much

much for your dinner.—As to supper you will seldom be regaled with any thing besides the remains of noon, except a sallad with vinegar and brown sugar; for oil is a prohibited commodity in this house.—Then for your breakfast, which to have been regular I should have begun with, but afraid to tell you, a large bowl, or it may be, in respect to your quality, a white porringer, with a mess of milk-pottage, or parley-broth with plumbs in it, will be presented to you, possibly with encomiums, such as—*That is good wholesome food, and opens the stomach in a morning.*

CAN then the nice, the elegant *Lothario*, take up with such coarse entertainment?—Can a wit so refined and delicate as yours descend to the conversation of an homely rustic?—Can you exchange the dear delights of *Ranelagh* and *Vauxhall*, for plain *arable* and *pasture*? For, I assure you, no grounds are here wasted in pleasure-gardens, wildernesses, or groves.—Can you resolve to retire to your chamber as soon as the sun leaves our hemisphere, as you either must do or sit alone; and be waked at four in the morning, with the lowing of fourscore cows, that come to be milked in the yard;—the guggling of turkey cocks, the quackling of ducks in an adjacent pond, and the cawing of rooks, lodged in a row of hospitable old trees, just before your window?—If, I say, you can bring yourself to be pleased, for a few weeks, with this manner of life, I dare assure you of a hearty welcome.—If I may judge of your answer by your usual politeness, you will tell me you can submit to all this, and much more for *Gloriana's* sake.—In case, therefore, of such a compliment, and supposing it sincere,



sincere, I must further acquaint your lordship, that I shall not bear you company in any part of the entertainment I have describ'd;—that I never set my foot in the farm-house, but have such of their provision as I make choice of, brought from thence by the girl who attends me, and is placed before me on a little three-legg'd stool, which just holds one plate, and a knife and fork.—You may, indeed, visit me as often as you think proper, in my hut; but it must be on this condition, that you never mention one word of love, gallantry, or politicks:—That all our discourse shall turn on points of philosophy.—In a word, you must forget all business,—forego all pleasures,—throw off all desires, all inclinations relating to this world, and imagine yourself already an inhabitant of some other of the celestial orbs; you shall consult my globe, and chuse which of them you like best, provided it be not that I have fixed upon for my own residence; because if we fancied ourselves both in one place, it would afford no room for description, or argument, on the beauties and conveniencies of the several climates.

AND now, my lord, having enumerated all those particulars concerning your reception here, and stipulated on what terms you may be a welcome guest, I shall have nothing wherewith to reproach myself, whether you persist, or not, in your intention of coming to,

Yours, &c.

GLORIANA.

P. S. I thank your lordship for the fine *Euclid* you were so good to send me by *Thomas*:—  
The tooling, the gilding of the cover is very  
curious,

curious, and the register, as well as toffels, shew the elegance of your fancy : It shines, among the other volumes, with a distinguished lustre, like *Lothario* himself, in the circle at St. James's ; yet, I assure you, I should have been equally fond of it in a plain russet binding. — See what a change the study of philosophy has made in me. Adieu !



## EPISTLE CXXIV.

[ *In answer to the foregoing.* ]

From *LOTHARIO* to *GLORIANA*.

*Madam,*

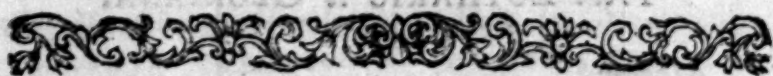
 RECEIVED yours, and doubt not but you imagine, you have said enough to keep a man of my humour at as great a distance as possible from the air of \*\*\*\* ; but you will find I am able to give you greater proofs of my resolution, than you did me the honour to expect from me. In spite of the terrible ideas you have taken pains to inspire in me, concerning the way in which I must live among those people who seem to be of the true *Gothic* race, I am upon the wing to take my flight towards you. — There is one of the conditions on which I am to be allowed visiting you, which at first, indeed, pretty much alarmed me : — It seemed very hard, that one world might not be sufficient to contain us both ; but, on second thoughts, I grew more easy on this score ; for, as I am pretty certain, you have not chose

*Venus*

*Venus* for your dwelling, and I am at liberty to fix on any of those you have rejected, I shall certainly make that pretty twinckler my home, and do not despair but to convince you there are so many charms to be found in it, as will prevail on you to quit your own orb, and take refuge in mine.—Imagination gives a spur to my impatience, and I shall give my horses, which now are at the door, little respite till they bring me to \*\*\*\*. The moment I seal this, I mount:—I fly to gain the happy opportunity of declaring once more, in person, how much I am,  
The excellent *Gloriana's*,

Most devoted

LOTHARIO.



### EPISTLE CXXV.

*From AMADEA to MELISSA, desiring she would excuse her for not complying with her repeated invitations of coming to visit her at court.*

Dear MELISSA,



A M extremely sorry at finding myself obliged to refuse you any thing, more especially in a request, which, if it were not for some reasons, would be both an honour, and pleasure to me to comply with;—but I know not how it is, whether there is somewhat in that air you at present breathe, that has the power of changing the very natures of all who live in it, to the reverse of what they were before; or, that you think yourself under an absolute necessity of conforming to the rules of

be-



behaviour practised by those you are among ; but, certain it is, you are not the same *Melissa* there, as when I had the happiness of being first acquainted with you, or as you still appear when I am so fortunate as to find you at *Mira's*, *Eusebia's*, *Sophronia's*, or some other of our common friends.

BELIEVE me, my dear *Melissa*, I should always rejoice in every opportunity of waiting on you, could I flatter myself with finding you alone, or with any other company than such as my serious turn of mind will, by no means, permit me to be easy in. Indeed I cannot bear to see persons, eminent for their birth and stations, not only forget what is becoming their rank, but also degenerate from the dignity of the human nature, to put on that of an animal, I forbear to mention ; and of such there are, alas ! but too great a number of both sexes.

IN the only visit I made you since your promotion, as you are pleased to call it, heavens ! how my ears were deafened with the incessant clamour of vociferous tongues ? There were no hearers, for all were speakers ; and the conversation, if it can be called such, seemed neither to be dictated by the heart, nor brain :—No design indicated, no argument attempted, but words,—mere words alone, which chance threw out.—The only intelligible thing I heard was from a fop, all covered over with bugles and embroidery, who cried, *What shall we do to kill time to-night ?*

O *Melissa* ! that phrase of *killing time*, common as it is, to me sounds dreadful :—It amazes  
me

me to find, that any reasonable being can want to waste, and destroy, the supreme blessing allowed us by indulgent heaven:—A blessing, which when once deprived of, we can enjoy no more.

I DO not think you can so far forget the excellent education you have had under the best of parents and instructors, and, at the same time, forfeit that fine understanding you have received from nature, and for which you are so justly celebrated, as to be really pleased with the modes and manners of those you are obliged to converse with.—No; you only affect to be easy with what it is not in your power to reform; you will not, therefore, wonder, that I, who, thank heaven, am entirely free from all necessity of putting myself under any constraint, and dare make use of the reason which God has given me, should avoid mingling with persons, who seem to be ashamed of having the least share of it.

*Sophronia* writes me word, in her last letter, that she expects you will pass some days with her at her country seat:—If so, I shall do myself the favour of joining you there, and even of accompanying you in your journey, if you will let me know the day. I beg you will steal one moment, tho' it be from sleep, to assure me I have not offended beyond a pardon, and that you have still some remains of kindness for her, who is, with the sincerest regard, dear *Melissa*,

Your most obedient servant,

AMADEA.

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE CXXVI.

*From BELLIZA in town, to HERMIONE in the country, with the account of an intrigue of a very particular nature, which she was accidentally made acquainted with.*

Dear HERMIONE,



KNOW very well, that to you, who live in the country, an account of every little accident that happens in *London* is an agreeable amusement; I am therefore glad fortune has put it in my power to give you an entertainment of this kind, by the detail of an adventure, which has in it somewhat more than ordinarily particular.

SOME repairs, that were wanting in my house, obliged me to go out of it, in order to avoid the noise and dirt of the workmen: I took a lodging in the same street, which I was recommended to by a friend, and where I am as well accommodated as I can desire, or could expect.

THE third day after I came here, happening to walk into the garden for a little air, I saw, at some distance from me, a young lady in a loose dishabille, endeavouring to climb up a little wall at the extremity of the terrass:—The rustling of my silks, as I passed, made her turn her head; on sight of me she quitted her design, and ran with all the speed imaginable into the house. I was a little surprized, and the more so,



so, as I had been told there were no lodgers in the house, except myself and servants; and that the whole family, before my coming, consisted only of a gentleman, who is an ecclesiastic, his niece, and one maid servant. Having no company that evening, I asked the niece to drink tea with me: As we were discoursing on ordinary affairs, I told her what I had seen, and asked, more thro' chance, than any great curiosity, who that young lady was? — I had scarce finished my demand, when the person, to whom I made it, set down her dish of tea, begged my pardon, and flew out of the room with the utmost precipitation. — She was not above a minute absent, and on her return, after saying many handsome things, in excuse for her abrupt behaviour, gave me the following little history as the motive of it.

“ THAT young lady, said she, whom you saw in the garden, is the daughter of a particular friend of my uncle's: — She has been bred in the most strictest principles of virtue and religion, and was, with the consent of her parents, addressed to for marriage, by a person who could not but be looked upon as a suitable match for her. — As her young heart had hitherto been unaffected either with the joys, or pains of love, so likewise she had no aversion to her lover: She received him as the man ordained by heaven, and those who, under heaven, had the disposal of her, to be her husband; — her carriage towards him was perfectly modest, yet so obliging, that he had all the reason in the world to flatter himself with having made some impression on her heart. After a courtship of about four months, in all which time she gave him room to hope he  
every

every day gained ground in her affection, the wedding morning was fixed. Never was there a promise of a more happy pair, and doubtless would have been so, if an unforeseen and most unlucky accident had not intervened, to blast their mutual good, and damp the torch of *Hymen*, 'ere it was fully lighted.

“ THIS young creature, whom I shall call *Magdalena*, happened to be acquainted with a lady, who has the most tender intercourse with a certain baronet, well known to the polite world.—The eve before the day appointed for her marriage, she casually met him at the apartment of his mistress:—They had never seen each other before, and fatal was the interview to the peace of both.—Love, to whose effects, till now, she had been a stranger, rushed all at once on her unguarded soul, and seized on all its faculties.—His roving heart, susceptible of every new attraction, could not behold her sprightly charms without wishing to become the possessor of them:—What he once desires, he never fails attempting to accomplish:—He said many soft things to her, even in the presence of her who had been, for several years, the reigning object of his passion.—Night coming on, and she being obliged to take leave, he would needs conduct her home in his chariot, which had been, all this time, waiting at the door.

“ HAVING found, before their coming out, that she was to be married the next morning, he thought no time was to be lost in the prosecution of his design, and taking her by the hand, which he strenuously pressed between both his, *What*, said he, *is all this heaven of beauty to be*

*disposed of to-morrow? — Have I seen you only to be rendered the most miserable of mankind? —* She was surprized, but far from being offended at hearing him speak in this manner, and not knowing well what answer to make, kept entirely silent, till he asked her the name and quality of the happy person who was to be her husband; on which she immediately replied, that the man whom her parents had decreed for her, was called *Clodius*, and that he was an eminent tradesman. — *How!* cried the baronet, disdainfully, *must charms, which would enrich the bed of the first monarch upon earth, be profaned by the touch of a little servile mechanic? — Forbid it all that's noble! — It cannot sure be the effect of your own choice! — A form, like yours, must have a soul more delicate! — Say, most adorable Magdalena, can you love a man, who, by his occupation, if no otherwise, is so unworthy of you? —* To which she answered, with a sigh, that she had never asked herself the question, but must obey her parents: By this time they were got almost to her father's door, which he perceiving, and not willing to part with her, till he had known more of her sentiments on this head, ordered his coachman to drive slowly round a great square, adjacent to the street where she lived.

“ SHE either wanted artifice, or had not the power of concealing from him the pleasure she took in the tender pressures he frequently gave, not only to her hands, but unresisting lips: — He found the conquest he had gained, and nothing is more strange, than that he did not compleat his victory, by seizing on the last triumph she could yield. — He contented himself, however, with obtaining her promise of meeting him the  
very



very first first moment she could get out after her marriage, which, she told him, it was utterly impossible for her either to defer, or wholly to break off:—After mutually interchanging kisses and embraces, they parted.—He exulting in the assurance of being shortly in the possession of charms, which his present inclination represented to him as superior to those of any other woman he knew;—she full of perplexed imaginations, yet indulging transports no way conformable to the duty she was about to vow before the altar.

“ IN spite of the excuses she makes, continued my obliging informer, the world, in my opinion, would have judged less severely of her conduct, if she had gone directly away with the baronet, and never married *Clodius*, rather than have prophaned the sacred ceremony, and made an innocent man, who truly loved her, the dupe of her infamous intentions.—I have already told you, that this unhappy person had always been indifferent to her; but time, and the excessive tenderness with which he regards her, might have inspired some share of it in her; but the strong passion she had entertained in favour of another, rendered him now detestable in her eyes.—She went with him to the holy temple, —gave him her hand, —was made his bride, but, —would you believe it, madam, —resolved never to be his wife.”

PERCEIVING I looked in a strange consternation at these words, as not being able to comprehend the meaning of them, she smiled, and told me, that what she had said might very well surprize me;—that she expected no less, but would soon explain the ænigma, if I would give her leave to go on with so tedious a narrative.—

I assured her I was impatient for the catastrophe of an adventure, which seemed to be of a pretty extraordinary kind ; — on which she resumed her discourse in these, or the like terms :

“ STRANGE is it, pursued she, that so young a creature, not yet nineteen, could have the courage and the address to impose upon a man, whom she had made her husband, in the manner she now did ; — but love had taught her subtilty, and having determined to preserve herself entire for her dear baronet, had recourse to a stratagem, which I should never have given credit to, if the account she has since given of it, had not been confirmed by the repeated asseverations of *Clodius* himself.

“ IT was in the beginning of *Advent*, that these ill-starr'd nuptials were celebrated, if I may properly say celebrated, where consummation is wanting. — You start again, madam, yet so it is. — Feigning an excess of devotion, she entreated he would not insist on the rights of marriage, till those holy weeks were past. — As he knew she had spent some years of her life in a convent, he imagined she had imbibed some of those superstitions, generally imputed to recesses of that sort ; but as respect is always the companion of a pure and sincere affection, he complied with her request, how much averse soever his inclinations were to it.

“ WHILE *Advent* lasted, she every day went abroad, under pretence of visiting the churches ; but, in reality, to meet her baronet, whom, the very next day after her marriage, she had advertised by a billet where, and at what hour, he should find her.

“ WHAT

“WHAT liberties he took, or what concessions she made him, heaven, and themselves; only know; but, without being very censorious, one may guess she did not pass her days with him, as she had done her nights with *Clodius*.

“*Advent* at last was over, to the great joy of the impatient bridegroom; but how cruel was his disappointment, when instead of returning the caresses he was about to give her on this occasion, she burst into tears!—confessed to him, that what she had told him concerning *Advent*, was the least part of the motive, which had obliged her to refuse to him the obedience of a wife; and, that she had in reality made a solemn vow to the blessed mother of our Saviour, to remain a virgin for the space of seven weeks after her marriage, whenever it should happen.

“*Clodius*, you may be sure, was not well pleased, yet had too much religion to compel her to the breach of an oath, and lay every night by her side as chaste, though less contented, than the vestals, whom, she pretended, had inspired her with a resolution to devote the first weeks of her marriage to piety and religious acts alone.

“SIX of the seven weeks she feigned to keep so sacred, were now elapsed, in all which time the honest heart of *Clodius* had not the least suspicion of the deception she had put upon him: Whether her prolific brain had any thing in store, yet farther to beguile him, is uncertain, the time was come when the frauds she had already practised were to be laid open, and a stop put to any future attempts by her of that nature.



“ *Fulvia*, for by that name the mistress of the baronet is distinguished, had reason to guess, by some late marks of coldness she had observed in him, that he was in chase of a new object; and having taken this into her head, soon discovered both who her rival was, and the place where they met; for, as the poet says,

*What can escape a jealous woman's knowledge?*

“ DOUBLY enraged at the inconstancy of her lover, and the baseness of a woman whom she had made her confidante, she flew directly to the husband and the mother of *Magdalena*, related all she knew, and to aggravate their resentment against her rival, told them a true and most pity-moving story, how the baronet, in a far country, had found the means, in her extreme youth, to seduce, and bring her from her friends; shewed them a fine boy she had by him, and added, that her whole dependance, and that of her child, was on his honour, which she knew not how far the insinuations of *Magdalena* might prevail on him to forfeit.

“ HAPPILY for *Magdalena*, her father was out of town, when this intelligence was brought: He is a man strictly tenacious of the honour of his family, and I know not how far the first emotions of his rage might have transported him, on the discovery of a thing of this nature; but the mother was of a more mild, and considerative disposition; and the husband, whom one would have expected to have immediately taken fire, behaved with a coldness scarce to be credited.—The truth is, the love he had for his transgressing wife made him flatter himself, that  
the

the whole story was no more than a meer suspicion, raised by jealousy in the mind of *Fulvia*. It was, however, agreed upon by them, that no notice should be taken to *Magdalena* of what they had heard; but that a spy should be sent after her wherever she went, in order that the truth might be brought to light.

“THE person, who was employed on this errand, soon brought word, that he saw her take a chair at the end of the street, which he followed till it carried her into a coffee-house of no good fame.

“*Clodius* went directly where his emissary had informed him she had entered, and asked for her by her name; but the people of the house denied they knew any such person, and he having no warrant, or proper officers with him to search the house, was obliged to return as he had come.

“*Magdalena* and the baronet were immediately told who had been there, on which they judged it necessary to separate, lest he should come back with an authority, and find them together.

“*Magdalena* having reason to believe some accident had betrayed her, cast about in her mind how she should wave off the certainty of what, she flattered herself, was no more than a suspicion.—The baronet had, that morning, given her a purse of guineas, and a fine seal, which, she considered, if found upon her, might be a kind of proof against her.—In the hurry of spirits, which this turn in her affairs had occasioned, she could think of nobody but me to en-

trust it with; but finding neither myself, nor uncle at home, she left it with the maid, desiring she would keep it safe, and secret, till she saw her again.

“ MY uncle happened that very morning to call upon her mother, who, as she concealed nothing from him, related to him, in a flood of tears, the ill conduct of her daughter, having been just informed in this latter part of it, by the almost distracted *Clodius*.

“ *Magdalena*, in the mean time, depending on the good-nature of her husband, had the courage to go home, and denied every thing he taxed her of, with an unparalell'd assurance, even tho' he confronted her with the very man, who had seen her go out of the chair into that house her husband mentioned.

“ ON my uncle's talking to me somewhat of this affair before our servant, she presently told us of the purse and seal *Magdalena* had deposited in her hands; which serving as a confirmation of their guilt, my uncle bid the maid deliver up to him, thinking it proper the husband should be consulted on this passage.—Some business of importance, however, preventing him from sending to *Clodius* the same day, I must return to that unhappy man, and tell you in what manner his easy faith was yet once more imposed upon by the deceitful *Magdalena*.

“ ALL the artifices, known by the most wiley of her sex, were now put in practice by her, in order to stagger his belief, as to what was told him, concerning her going to the coffee-house:  
—Tears,



—Tears, sighs, and feigned tenderness, were all employed;—she even fell at his feet, conjured him to think her innocent, and had the prophaneness to appeal to heaven that she was so.

“NEVER was poor man divided in his sentiments like *Clodius*:—The person he sent to follow her was one he could depend upon: He still persisted in his accusation:—She, on the other hand, was as obstinate in her defence. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that a husband who loved, as *Clodius* did, should rather be inclined to believe what he wished, than what he feared:—His reason, notwithstanding, was not wholly laid asleep by her enchantments; he would not leave her the whole day, nor suffer her to go abroad:—They dined,—they drank tea,—they supped,—they went to bed together,—neither of them had much sleep: The different agitations of their minds kept both equally awake. *You seem troubled, my dear, said she, but the time will shortly come, when you will have a convincing proof, that I never have been another's; and my whole future conduct shall be one continued testimony, that I can be but yours alone.*—These words, accompanied with a tender pressure of his hand, so transported him, that he was ready to curse himself for having suspected her virtue.—They passed their hours in mutual protestations of affection, till the morning was pretty far advanced, then pretending herself a little disordered, she arose, and said she must go into the garden for air; but would come to bed again:—She threw on only a loose night-gown and petticoat, as he thought; but she had the address to get from behind the curtain her hoop, capuchin, and bonnet, which she put on in the next room, and

went directly out of the house :—He waited some time for her return ; but, finding she came not, rang the bell, and having asked a maid servant, who instantly came up, where her mistress was, the girl answered, that she saw her go out at the street door, about three or four minutes before.

“ *Clodius* seemed now indeed entirely bereft of his senses ; he jumped out of bed, ran with his cloaths half on into the street, enquiring of every one he met, if they had seen his wife.—None being able to inform him, he went to her mother, and alarmed that good woman with this second matter of complaint.—Where *Magdalena* was, during this time, she has not yet thought fit to confess ; but she sent a chairman to our maid, desiring she would return by him the purse and seal she had left in her hands the day before :—My uncle and I were then at breakfast. She asked us what answer she should send to *Magdalena* ; on which my uncle bid her say, she would deliver nothing till she came herself.—The fellow was no sooner gone than we sent for *Clodius*, who happily was found as he was coming from her mother’s : We told him of the confidence his wife reposed in our maid, and gave him the things she had entrusted with her.

“ WHILE we were discoursing on this affair, *Magdalena* herself knocked at the door :—We saw her from the window, and ordered the maid to take her down into the kitchen, under pretence of restoring her the things with more privacy.—As soon as the door was shut, we all ran down.—It would be too tedious to repeat the just reproaches made by the despairing *Clodius* : I shall

shall only say, that finding herself detected past all possibility of excuse, she threw off dissimulation, avowed the hatred she had for him, and declared no arguments, or force, should ever make her live with him as a wife. *Death*, cried she, *is not more detestable than the thoughts of your embraces.*

“ALL that could be urged being in vain, *Clodius* entreated my uncle would confine her in our house, till he could resolve in what manner to dispose of her.

“THE room he made choice of for her prison, is a back chamber up two pair of stairs, the key of which I have ever since kept myself. By what means she got the lock open, I have not yet found out; but had not your ladyship’s unexpected presence so luckily prevented it, she had, doubtless, by this time, escaped our vigilance.”

HERE the gentlewoman concluded her story, which, I hope, will seem no more tedious to you, than it did to me. ’Tis highly probable the adventure will not end here, and that my next may bring you something farther concerning it. I am, in the mean time,

My dear *Hermione*,

Yours, &c.

BELLIZA.





## EPISTLE CXXVII.

*From ALINDA to CELIA, on false delicacy in matters of love. Occasioned by that lady's having censured her for confessing an affection for a man, to whom she was to be married in a few days.*

**N**OTHING ever surprized me so much, as to hear that my conduct, which, thank heaven, has always escaped the tongue of malice, should, at last, be censured with such cruelty in all companies, by a friend; who, in case of any attack that way, I should have expected would have defended it:—But, it seems, I am now unworthy the regard of *Celia*,—that I have forfeited all pretensions to her love, or esteem.—And why? because I have not been ashamed to confess an affection for a man of sense and honour; and to whom, with my parents approbation, I am, in a few days, to be united by the most sacred and indissoluble bonds!—No;—but you say, I ought to seem averse,—pretend I was forced into marriage by my father's positive command, or, at least, that it was merely in compassion to the sufferings of my lover, and to save his life, that I had let myself be prevailed on to give him my hand; that to own an inclination for him had any share in my consent, is monstrous!—abominable!—a piece of impudence, which you are amazed I could be guilty of.—Indeed, *Celia*, these are very hard words, yet they do not make me blush, either with shame or anger; I rather contemn them

them as the dictates of a *false delicacy*, I will not say of a *false modesty*; tho' some, perhaps, who hear you talk in this manner, may have the ill-nature to ascribe it to that motive.

FOR my part, I always thought, nor can be easily brought to change my opinion in this point, that the most tender love and friendship ought to precede the marriage rites;—that both parties should be, as much as possible, acquainted with each other's hearts; and all suspicion of indifference on either side entirely removed.—What idea can a man have of future happiness, with a woman, who, while he is preparing to lead her to the altar, affects an insensibility either of his love, or merits? And how awkwardly will that soft compliance, which is the duty of a wife, sit on her, who, till she became so, has accustomed herself to treat him, who is now her husband, only with coldness and disdain?

IN the beginning of courtship, I confess, a woman can scarcely be too much reserved.—Whatever inclination she finds rising in her heart should be carefully restrained from breaking out in any word or action, which might convert his hope of gaining her into an assurance of doing so.—Many men are false and wavering.—'Tis perseverance tries sincerity; but where a long series of unquestionable proofs have convinced her of his worth, and she is determined to give herself to him, it is both ungenerous and impolitic to conceal from him the motives on which she yields.

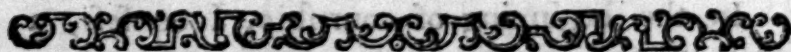
I KNEW a lady once, who was courted by a gentleman every way deserving of her, and who  
loved

loved her with a most perfect tenderness :—She had, at least, an equal degree for him ; but concealed it under airs so coquette and skittish, that, despairing of ever bringing her to a settled resolution, he quitted her, and sought a cure for his hopeless passion in absence.—She raved at his inconstancy ; but every one else approved of his conduct : And to her other mortifications she had that added, of being wholly unpitied.

LET this example, *Celia*, be a warning to you.—I think no loss more great than that of a deserving lover, and shall never risque my future happiness, for the sake of a short-liv'd triumph over a heart, I think, devoted to me.—Farewell.—You will, one time or other, I hope, be convinced of your error in this point, and acknowledge the injustice you have been guilty of,

Yours, &c.

ALINDA.



### EPISTLE CXXVIII.

*From THEOPHILA to a lady, whose only son, a youth of great hopes, lay at the point of death ; exhorting her to patience and resignation to the Divine Will, under this and every other affliction.*

*Madam,*

T is not that I wonder at, or condemn, your just sense of the loss you are too likely to sustain ; but because a calamity, such as yours, requires every help that can be applied, that I take the liberty



liberty of offering my advice.—I know no woman has more fortitude than yourself; but, alas! human courage of itself is not sufficient:—You must fly to the Eternal Source of all consolation, 'tis in Him alone you can find relief.—Your son yet lives, and while he continues to do so, lay him on the altar chearfully with *Abraham*; resign him to that fate which seems decreed for him, and who knows but heaven may avert the impending blow, and bid him live, to recompence his mother's piety.—Keep ever in your mind this memorable saying of Mr. *Pope*, that,

*In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.*

So that whether your son lives, or dies, the Supreme and All-wise Director of his fate does it for the best, both for him and you.—Let not then the flattering expectations, which his near approaching maturity afforded you, dwell upon your mind:—Think not how happy you should have been, to have seen him rise to all those honours, and that applause, which virtue and benevolence will extort, even in the most vicious and corrupt age:—Rather reflect, that if he is thus early called, it is to receive blessings more substantial than any this vain world can give; and that,

*Heav'n saw him ripe, perhaps, tho' not full blown;  
Therefore thought fit to seize him as its own.*

BE assured, dear madam, that, in all misfortunes religion is our only refuge:—If we truly love God, he will either remove the causes of our complaint, or enable us to sustain them, in  
such

such a manner, as shall more endear us to him ; and I know not whether there is any one virtue more acceptable in the eyes of heaven, than the well-bearing of afflictions.

LET not then, I beseech you, an immoderate grief overwhelm all those considerations, which are the duty not only of every christian, but also of every rational being of what persuasion, in matters of faith, soever they may be.—And it is a truth, which cannot be denied, that there have been some *heathens* who, in the point I am speaking of, have left us examples worthy of imitation. Not that I would have you a stoic : To pretend an insensibility of pain under the distresses of mind or body, was the affectation of that philosophy. No ; I would have you feel every affliction in a proper degree, but let not impatience and a fruitless perseverance embitter all your other comforts in life, and harden your heart against the wisdom of Divine Providence from whom only it could proceed.

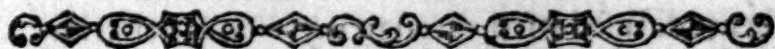
I CANNOT forbear, however, observing, that while I am recommending resignation, there is a sort of it, which has only the shew of virtue, but, in reality, is far from being such.—I mean that of relinquishing merely because we know it is in vain to contend with Providence. This enforced,—this sullen resignation, has in it a great mixture, both of self-love and ostentation, and cannot be any way acceptable to the Deity.—Those who practise it, I am apt to imagine, reason with themselves in this manner : *To grieve for what I cannot remedy, would only hurt my constitution ; and, if I appear unaffected, the world will applaud my fortitude.*

To

To bring ourselves to that frame of mind, which can alone dispose us to such a resignation, as I could wish to see in ever one, we must be convinced of the infinite love God has for mankind;—the innumerable instances which every hour presents us with, of his care over us; and always keep in memory, that we are indebted to him for blessings superior far to any he deprives us of:—Immortality! the means of grace! and the hope of everlasting glory!—These reflections will certainly render his chastisements welcome to us, as they are never inflicted, but either to reform our errors, or improve our virtues. These are remonstrances, which, I hope, you have no occasion for, even in this, the severest trial you can undergo; yet will serve to shew with how sincere a regard I have the honour to be, madam,

Your most humble servant,

THEOPHILA.



## EPISTLE CXXIX.

*From ORYTHIA to CELEMENA, acquainting her, that she was much less happy than the world imagined, and desiring her advice how to behave, so as to be more easy.*

Dear CELEMENA,

**H**OW imperfect is all human happiness! how deceitful our expectations of bliss without alloy!—The most exquisite sweets of life are mingled with a bitter, which leaves a gall upon the mind; yet ought we not to repine at Providence, or pretend heaven deals its blessings with a nig-  
gard



gard hand.—No ; —'tis our own humours, — our own empoisoned natures, that will not suffer us to relish, as we ought, the felicities we enjoy.

You will be surprized at this from me, and indeed may very well be so, as every one, that knows me, looks on me as the most fortunate woman in the world.—A few weeks past I thought myself so.—It was but the second of last month, which gave me to my dear *Bellgarde* :—You accompanied us to the altar, and were witness of that perfect contentment which sat on both our faces.—O, had it continued, we had been blest indeed ! For the first four or five days, after our marriage, you know we saw no company, except yourself, and two or three near relations ; but afterwards all our acquaintance had invitations, and since then we were scarce ever alone, but in those hours ordained by nature for repose.—The satisfaction of my heart diffused itself through my whole behaviour, and added to that sprightliness and vivacity, which was always natural to me. *Bellgarde* also appeared extremely chearful in company ; but I could not forbear taking notice, that when we were alone, all his endeavours could not conceal a certain gloominess of soul which gave me some alarms.—Perceiving it every day increased, I asked him some tender questions, which the sincere affection I have for him suggested, concerning this change in his temper : He would fain have avoided giving any direct answer, and have silenced my enquiries by an air of pleasantry, which I could easily see he but forced himself to put on.—On this I grew very serious, and told him, I was convinced that something troubled him, and that whatever it were the union between

tween us gave me a right to be made partaker of it: He made no immediate reply to these words, but fixed his eyes upon me with a look, which spoke the agitations he that moment sustained;—at last, *Ah, Orythia, Orythia!* cried he, *seek not to know from me, a secret, of which you may so easily inform yourself.—The world believes me blest, infinitely blest!—You alone can tell why I am not so.—How true, O Dryden! are thy words?*

*Few know what cares a husband's peace destroys,  
His real griefs, and his dissembled joys.*

BELIEVE me, my dear *Celestina*, I was so astonished at hearing him, that I had not the power of speaking one word; but stood as silent and confused, as tho' conscious of some crime to merit such a treatment.—A few moments, however, serving to recover me, *What*, said I, with some resentment, *do you then already repent of having become a husband: If you are unhappy, how doubly so am I?*

I COULD not conclude these words without letting fall some tears, which the excess of those various emotions, that then filled my breast, forced from my eyes;—which he perceiving, *What have I said*, cried he, *what have I done?—Wretch that I am!* and flying to me, caught me in his arms, and pressed me to his bosom, with such transports of unfeigned affection, as are not to be described.—*Oh, I have been to blame*, went he on, *I ought to be content with the happiness I am in possession of; since it is much more than I can pretend to deserve.—You deserve all things*, said I; *but I beseech you, by all the love you have professed,*  
and

*and which I flatter myself you have for me, to tell me what you mean.*

HE seemed very loth to give any direct answer to what I said; but I urged him so home, to tell me in what point I had given him any cause of disquiet, that he was at length prevailed on, and making me sit down by him on a settee with one of his arms round my waist, and the other about my neck, he began to ease, or rather to add to, my surprize, in these terms:

*FAR be it from me, said he, my most loved, and most adored Orythia, to accuse you of any thing. — No; — you are all that the most raptured fancy could invent, of fair and good. — I have only to repine at nature, who has dealt her bounties to me with a too scanty hand. — Fain would I be deserving an excellence like yours: Fain would have the wit of Dorilaus; — the fine person of Alexis; — the wisdom and sagacity of Learchus; and, in a word, all those perfections you are so quick-sighted to discern in others.*

As I remembered to have expressed my sense of those gentlemen's several merits, in the very words he made use of, I was no longer at a loss to account for the motive of his uneasiness; but unwilling to mention it, I replied, that if I had not found all those good qualities centered in him, I should not with so much pleasure have become his wife. He made a most tender reply to what I said, yet I could perceive he took it rather as the effects of my complaisance, than the real dictates of my heart.

I HAVE a natural aversion to all kinds of dissimulation, and could not long refrain from expressing



pressing my fears, that there was a propensity to jealousy in him, which, if encouraged, would, one time or other, render us both unhappy.

HE would, by no means, confess himself guilty of this foible, but made this nice distinction, That what was commonly implied by jealousy, was a base suspicion of the want of honour;—that my virtue was his security, as to my person;—that he knew me capable of resisting all manner of temptations; but that he wished to appear such in my eyes, as should lay me under no necessity of exerting that virtue in his favour. I then assured him, heaven was my witness, with the greatest sincerity, that I married him because I thought him the most worthy of his sex; and, that since I had been his wife, I had, and ever should make it my study to please him, much more thro' inclination than duty. I added so many endearments to this assertion, that he was perfectly ravished with the condescension I had shewed, as he was pleased to call it.

It would look too much like vanity in me, to repeat the many tender things he said to me on the occasion. I shall only tell you, that they were such as flattered me with the hope he would thenceforward be entirely at ease;—but, alas! how sadly has my fond wish deceived me!—The civilities, with which I treat even those of his own blood, I can perceive, are painful to him.—What is it I must do?—I cannot avoid seeing a great deal of company if I would; besides my own friends, the post he holds, his numerous acquaintance, and the delight he takes in making frequent entertainments for them, lays me open to the hearing of abundance of fine things.—Am

I to blush, affect a reserve, and seem to take in earnest, what I know are only words of course, the tribute paid to my sex and rank, by all the gay and polite?—A constant round of wit is perpetually played off at our house.—Am I to stifle the little talents I have received from nature and education, and sit a silent stupid auditor?—'Tis possible that my humour, *Tous jour enjouée*, as the *French* phrase it, may sometimes sparkle out beyond what is altogether requisite;—yet were I to restrain it, I should become a mere mope;—by an aukward prudery damp all the spirit of the conversation, expose myself to the ridicule of the world, and, perhaps too, lose the greatest part of merit with him, in whose eyes I would chiefly wish to appear agreeable.

JUDGE then, my dear *Celestina*, how perplexing my situation is!—Other women often lament the want of ardour in the affections of their husbands; I am unhappy only in the excess of it;—yet so precious to me is the source of my inquietudes, that I could not support finding the cause removed, how much soever I tremble for the effects.—Advise me, dear creature; invent some way, if there be such a thing in nature, for me to preserve the one in all its present flaming fervency, and prevent the other from rising to too great a height:—Teach me, if you can, how to keep alive the passion of this beloved husband, and, at the same time, kill all suspicion in him of the tenderness with which my soul regards him; for, oh! I shudder at this maxim of the poet:

*Distrust in lovers is too warm a sun,  
But, ah! 'tis night in love when that is gone.*

Pity

PITY my condition, and believe me that I am, with the utmost sincerity.

Yours, &c.

ORYTHIA.



### EPISTLE CXXX.

*From JACINTA to LETITIA, given her an account of the motives which had induced her to marry LEANDER, and the cause on which they are separated.*

Dear LETITIA,



LL the world was surprized at my marriage; they will now be more so at my separation from a husband, whom I married meerly for love, and, till I put my large fortune into his hands, had scarce sufficient to maintain him like a gentleman. I will now tell you the source from which both these events proceed:—It was vanity; the extremest vanity and folly, on my side, that united us:—It is the utmost ingratitude and perfidiousness, on his, that parts us. The particulars of the story, equally shameful to both, are as follow:

I HAD the greatest intimacy, that could be, with a young woman called *Femima*; she was the daughter of a gentleman of one of the best families in *England*; but thro' the misconduct of her mother was left, at his death, with a very small fortune, too inconsiderable to give her any prospect of marrying according to her birth.—She was, indeed, very pretty, well accomplish'd,  
had



had a good deal of wit, and somewhat extremely sweet in her disposition.

A WEALTHY citizen, who had nothing disagreeable in his person and behaviour, and not thirty years of age, made his addresses to her.—All her friends persuaded her to accept the offer, as, her circumstances considered, she could not hope for a better match; but she continuing averse, I took the privilege of our friendship to talk seriously to her, and even went so far as to tell her, I would never see her more, if she persisted in rejecting, what she ought rather to accept with the greatest satisfaction. My remonstrances drew tears from her eyes, and she, at last, confess'd to me, that it was not in her power to comply with my advice;—that her heart and promise had long been given to *Leander*, and that she would prefer any kind of misery to that of being false to him.

I HAD heard of *Leander*,—had seen him, but without taking any notice of him; but after owning her affection for him, she represented him to me in such amiable colours, as raised in me a kind of curiosity to be acquainted with him; but this curiosity was greatly increased on her shewing me a packet of letters she had received from him, during his courtship.—Never had I read any thing so moving, so passionately tender, and so elegant withal:—It seemed as if the gods of love and wit joined to guide his pen, and dictated each enchanting sentence. None of those numberless declarations of love, which had been made to myself, had half that fervour, or that eloquence:—All were languid, dull, and spiritless, when compared with those of *Leander*.—*What,*  
cried

cried I to myself, *is it that all my lovers have wanted wit, or, that I want charms to inspire raptures such as these?* In fine, I now began to envy a maid, whose condition before I had so much pitied.— I could not bear to see her plume herself, in being so ardently beloved, and should now have been as pleased at any accident that might mortify, as I should once have been at any good fortune to make her happy.

I WAS one morning full of these wicked dispositions towards her, when she came jumping to my bed-side, and told me, that a certain nobleman, to whom *Leander* was well known, had given him the assurance of a considerable employment in the revenue, which was at his disposal, and that then there would be no impediment to their marriage, as it had been delayed till he was in a condition to maintain a family. I cannot express the vexation this gave me; but I dissembled it, and having told her, I was glad to hear any good fortune that befel her, pretended indisposition to excuse her not speaking much, on which she took her leave.

NEVER sure was any vanity like mine:—I could not be in love with *Leander*;—had seen him only *en passant*;—never spoke to him;—yet did I languish with the utmost impatience for the means of using all the little arts I was mistress of, to render *Jemima*, whom I now hated, less lovely in his eyes.

CHANCE, in a few days, seconded my endeavours; I found out, that the husband of a woman who made my hoop-petticoats, was *Leander's* taylor, and that he frequently called at

their house: This woman I sent for, made her my confidante, and, at the same time also, let her know it would be her interest to serve me. We consulted together, and she was to take all opportunities of detracting from *Femima's* merit, without seeming to do so; and, as in friendship to him, wish him to cast his eyes upon some lady of fortune. This being done to pave the way, we was to get him to drink tea with her some afternoon; I was to come in, as if by chance, and then manage as I should see proper.

ALL this being conducted as we had contrived, you may be sure I dressed myself to the best advantage, and repaired to the rendezvous.—The polite manner in which I was accosted by *Leander*, joined to the prepossession I had in his favour, extremely charmed me.—My subtle confidante, purposely, was so long preparing the tea, that the day was shut in before we had done. I then rose to take my leave, on which she offered to send for a chair, but, I said, I chose to walk, as it was but a small way to my house, and the weather fine:—*Leander*, on this, could do no less than beg permission to attend me home, which it is not to be doubted he easily obtained.

HAVING given himself this trouble, it seemed no breach of modesty in me, to desire him to walk in; I shewed him into the dining-room, and found means to enter into a conversation with him, which he could not have broke off without ill-manners:—I pressed him to stay supper, on purpose to have an opportunity of shewing my gilt plate.—On parting, I told him, I should be glad if he would call and bring me the



the news of the town, whenever he passed that way: He made a reply full of gallantry, as indeed was his whole deportment, all the time he had staid with me.

I CANNOT say, that tho' I took all this pains, I had any thoughts of marrying him, I was only ambitious of adding to my train of lovers, one so accomplished as *Leander*, and forcing *Femima*, who thought herself secure of his heart, to forego her triumph, and acknowledge the power of my superior charms.

O VANITY! vanity! that fatal source of all the errors our sex are guilty of, and cause of all our woes, how dearly have I paid for having obeyed thy dictates!

IN order to compleat the conquest my folly so much aimed at, I made the woman tell him, I was very much charmed with his person and behaviour, and hint to him, that she was well assured, that if he made his addressee to me on the score of marriage, the offer would not be rejected.

I HAD, however, the mortification to find, that neither my own invitations, nor all this woman said to him, engaged one visit from him for several days; but, when I almost began to give over expectation, I received a letter from him, containing a most passionate declaration of love, and withal assuring me that having been charmed with me at the first interview, he durst not trust himself with a second, fearing to offend me by a behaviour, which he knew not if it would be in his power to restrain within those

bounds I might expect from a person whose acquaintance with me had so short a date.

THIS letter was brought me by the hoop-petticoat-maker.—I would not write, but sent an answer by her full of encouragement, and which, I doubt not, but she highly exaggerated the kindness of, having now nothing more at heart than to bring about this match.—Alas ! I little thought how I was made the dupe of two of the most mercenary wretches in the world !

IN fine, he came,—he addressed,—I listened.—What, at first, was only vanity, now became inclination.—A marriage was huddled up between us, without the least consideration on my side, or consulting any one of my friends.

DURING the short time of *Leander's* courtship, I had found a pretence to quarrel with *Jemima*, in order to keep her from knowing any thing of what I have reason to believe she was as well acquainted with as myself ; for, would you think it, dear *Letitia*, that nobleman, on whom *Leander* had depended, had fallen into disgrace, and was turned out of office himself ; so that, it was despair which gave me this unworthy husband :—He behaved, however, towards me with complaisance enough, and I had not began to repent the step I had taken, when a young woman of my acquaintance, by the strangest accident in the world, discovered the whole scene of villany, and immediately revealed it to me.

THIS person goes almost every day to see a sister of her's, lately come to town, and lodges in a house, divided into several tenements.—She had

had often seen *Leander* pass in and out of the house.—At first she thought nothing of it, but finding he came often, had the curiosity to ask her sister, whom that gentleman came to visit; on which the other answered, that his wife lodged there; but, said she, *I find their marriage is a secret, for tho' he comes here almost every day, he seldom sleeps here.—I perceive, by the supper preparing in the kitchen, that he is to stay to night, and this is but the second he has done so, for these three weeks that I have been in town.* My friend then asked his name, and the other told him, they called him captain *La Val*.

THINKING she ought not to conceal from me the injury I sustained, she came that instant, and related what she had seen and heard. I was astonished, and could scarce credit the report; but recollecting, that *Leander* had once lain abroad, in the time she mentioned, and that he intended to do so that night, under pretence of visiting a relation at *Windsor*, I was but too well convinced of the reality of my misfortune.

MY friend had never seen the woman who passed for his wife, so could give me no description of her person, whereby I might guess if it was *Jemima*, or some other, for whose sake I was thus basely dealt with.—I scarce could think it was she, her carriage having always been perfectly modest; but then the excessive love I knew they had for each other, made me sometimes imagine, that nature had triumphed over virtue, even to this guilty height:—For the first hour I did nothing but curse *Leander*,—the folly of my own past conduct, and upbraided destiny for having rendered me so weak, and him so wicked.



The first transports of my rage being over, I consulted with my intelligencer how to proceed:—We went together to a magistrate, procured a warrant, and proper officers to serve it:—This done, we went all together to the house, where we doubted not but to find the criminal pair by this time in bed:—We enquired for the sister of the person who was with me:—I left the officers in her apartment, on being told, that the pretended captain *La Val*, and his lady, were not yet in bed, and accompanied by the woman that came with me, flew to the room where we were informed they lodged:—The door was half open:—We rushed directly in, and found *Leander* and *Jemima*, for it was she indeed, all undrest, and ready to go into bed, which a maid-servant was that instant warming for them.

I SHOULD spin out this narration to a too tedious length, should I go about to describe the confusion they both were in.—*Jemima* fell into a swoon; *Leander* stood like one transfixed with thunder, neither capable of assisting her, nor pacifying me.—I was just going to call in the officers, when somewhat within me restrained my voice, and bade me be less rigid. The cruel injustice I had done *Jemima*, in depriving her of all hopes of lawfully possessing a man so dear to her, and the arts I had practised on *Leander*, to seduce him from the faith he had pledged to her, now appeared to me in their true colours, and made me look upon myself as the greatest criminal of the three.—Struck with remorse and shame, desire of vengeance ceased,—I quitted the room with as much precipitation as I had entered it.—I told the officers I had been mistaken,—dismissed them with a present for their trouble, and returned

turned home, full of the most distracted and self-condemning thoughts.

Leander came home soon after me, but I would not suffer him to come into my chamber, and he lay in another room. I spent the whole remainder of the night in considering what would best become me to do; and having fixed my resolution, sent for him in the morning:—He approached me with looks full of shame and dejection, and was preparing to make some speech in excuse of the fault he had been guilty of; but I told him, that I would enter into no discussion on that affair;—that as it was impossible for us to live with any tolerable degree of happiness together, it was much the best way to part:—That a thousand pound, which I had given him to lay out on a mortgage, should be his own; but, that the rest of my fortune should be secured to myself, in such a manner as he should never be able to get any part of it into his possession, and that, if he would agree to these terms, I would order my lawyer to draw up articles accordingly. He would fain have affected a reluctance at the separation I proposed, but I could easily perceive his heart accepted it with gladness.

THIS affair, however, being settled between us, I insisted on his quitting my house that same day, which he accordingly did.—In about a week's time, the writings were drawn up, and properly executed for a final separation; and I now hear, that having sold a small annuity he had, and raised what money he could other ways, he is preparing to go to *Bulloign*, where he intends to merchandize, and fix his residence with his beloved *Jemima*. I can forgive them

both enough to wish them happy, but I much doubt if they will be so; for tho' I can excuse *Femina*, who may think herself more lawfully his wife than I could be, having been his by contract, before I ever saw his face; yet the double perfidy of *Leander*, both to her and me, is such, I think, as cannot but draw down on him the severest vengeance of offended heaven.

BUT I leave them to their fate;—my own I acknowledge to be most just:—The folly and vanity of my heart, in seducing a man, whom I then could not love, because I did not then know him, merely to enjoy the cruel satisfaction of triumphing over, and rendering miserable, a woman, whom I called my friend, and who had entrusted me with her dearest secrets, makes me hateful, even to myself, and forces me to confess, that all my mortifications, great as they are, are yet unequal to the crime which brought them on me.

O *Letitia*, beware of vanity!—Let not the pride of youth, or beauty, or wit, or wealth tempt you to imagine you have a right to invade the property of another. Let not the ambition of seeing yourself followed by a croud of lovers, mislead you from the paths of honour and discretion; nor endeavour to attract the men by any studied arts, much less, by any sinister means to lessen the merits of those of your own sex, who may happen, whether deservedly, or not, to be prized above you: Let my example be your warning, and teach you to avoid the errors and misfortunes of your sincere friend,

JACINTA.

End of the ELEVENTH BOOK.

EPISTLES.





# EPISTLES.

---

## BOOK XII.

---

### EPISTLE CXXXI.

*From MELLIORA to lady BETTY, with an account of the motives which had induced her to leave her father's house.*

Dear lady BETTY,



WHILE all my acquaintance are pretending to assign reasons for my quitting a father, who has always so tenderly loved me, according to their own suggestions alone, I shall take the pains to justify my conduct in this point; and yet, perhaps, you are the least of any at a loss, to guess at the true reasons of it. Your intimacy with my dear mother, giving you a perfect idea in what manner I was bred, and the few visits you have made at our house since her death, and my father's second marriage with this court belle, is sufficient to convince you of the wide difference between the company I was favoured with before that fatal hour, and those I have since been obliged to converse with. I say obliged, for there was no avoiding my new mother's guests:—Retire to my chamber,—shut myself in my closet, even there I was pursued,—

an alarm beat at my door,—and I must either come out, or hear the Creator of the world affronted by the impious ridicule they throw out on the long prayers they pretended to think I was making to him.

I WILL not wound your ears with a repetition of any of those prophane absurdities mine were perpetually shocked with, from that hoydenly rout, which croud the circle of her ladyship's drawing-room. I will only give a description of this society in two lines, which a friend of mine wrote extempore :

*Honour's dishonour, and title's disgrace,  
Dignify'd dregs of Britain's fall'n race.*

INDEED, lady Betty, some of these new-created nobility seem, to me, to be of a different species from those whose patents bear a more ancient date ; nor is it much to be wondered at, when we consider the motives on which many of them are raised to the exalted station they at present enjoy, and which, in my opinion, seems to have turned their heads ;—they would not else, certainly, behave as if they thought virtue, decency, and even reason, things beneath their regard.

BUT there is no occasion for me to enlarge upon this subject to a lady, who, by the care she takes to avoid such conversation, shews how much she disapproves of it ;—and, flatter myself, that what I have already said will be sufficient to absolve me, in your opinion, from all blame for what I have done.

My

My father, it is certain, at first, was much averſe to my departure; becauſe he thought it would look like the effects of that ſometimes unjuſt pique, the children of former marriages are apt to take againſt a parent, who is only ſuch in name; but, thank heaven, I have at laſt obtained his permiſſion, and now board, with my maid and one footman, at the houſe of a clergyman, who, tho' not dignified according to his merit, does honour to his profeſſion, by the moſt pious and exemplary life: He was never married, but has a ſiſter who lives with him, and manages the family. She is a very converſable woman:—I paſs many agreeable hours with her.—Indeed I think myſelf ſo happy, in being once more got among reaſonable creatures, that I do not caſt a look back on the grandeur I have left behind.

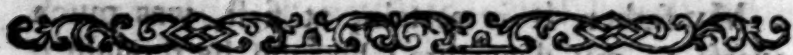
I AM as well contented with two plain diſhes, as with ten, crowded with the moſt expenſive exotics; and breathe the air as freely, and find it full as ſweet in a good clean hack, as in a ſpring chariot and fix.—Nothing is wanting to compleat my ſatisfaction, but your return to town, the news of which I impatiently expect. I am, dear lady Betty,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

MELLIORA.







## EPISTLE CXXXII.

*From DORIMANT to ARDELLA, returning her a silver medal she happened to drop at his house, in a visit she made to his lady.*

*Madam,*

**W**HEN deities of old, as poets tell,  
Vouchsaf'd a visit to some mortal's cell,  
To prove their presence, and renown  
their host,  
They left some token for the wretch to boast.

*Ardella, thus of late my welcome guest,  
For six short hours the happy chamber blest,  
At last departing, I but looking round,  
The place she sat in pav'd with silver found.*

My simile does not hold good, however; for tho' you are as much a goddess as *Juno, Minerva, Venus, Diana*, or any of that celestial hierarchy, which grace the walls of the *pantheon*, yet you are not equally bountiful, at least to me. I am confident you did not intend this precious medal as a present to me, — it would, therefore, be a kind of sacrilege to keep it. — Be pleas'd then to receive it back, and esteem the painful proof I now give you of my honour, as some sort of merit in me. I do assure you, I never parted with any thing out of my possession with half the reluctance I do this; — not only for the sake of that truly illustrious young hero, whose resemblance it bears, but, also, for that of the amiable person who, I dare say, has often been

con-

contemplated with regards which would have made *Alexander* himself, were he living, more proud than all his conquests.

My wife joins with me in returning thanks for the favour of your last obliging visit, which we both hope will shortly be followed by another, as you know her condition at present deprives her of the honour of waiting on you. I must not, however, suffer her to run away with any part of the acknowledgments the restoration I now make you has a claim to.—She is too sincere not to confess, when she sees you, that it is all my own act and deed; and that, if she had been so fortunate to have seen it first, it would have been some time before you would have called yourself, again, the mistress of it; but whatever liberties you ladies may take with each other, I had not the courage to presume so far. All the recompence I intreat for this piece of self-denial is, permission to unite my voice, with that of all the discerning part of mankind, in telling you that I am, your admirer,

DORIMANT.

**EPISTLE CXXXIII.**

*From BELLIZA to HERMIONE, with the sequel of the story of MAGDALENA and CLODIUS, as begun in book XI. page 215.*

My dear HERMIONE,

I Should not have let so many posts escape, without writing to you, had I not been delayed by the expectations of being able to acquaint you with the catastrophe of that adventure my last gave you so large

large a part of, and indeed what I have now to relate is not of a very interesting nature; such as it is, however, you shall be told in as brief a manner as I can.

*Clodius* having been informed of the attempt his wife had made to escape, gave orders she should be more strictly watched, which she accordingly was. In the mean time he consulted with her friends how to dispose of her, so as to prevent her bringing any farther disgrace on her family, or destruction on herself. Some people were for having her confined in a madhouse;—others advised him to make her a prisoner in a garret in his own house, where the windows should be grated, and the door kept always bolted, so as she should neither see, nor be seen by any body, except a servant, who should convey to her every day food enough to keep her alive; but to neither of these would the tender heart of *Clodius* consent, and he himself hit upon an expedient, which was approved of by all that heard it. It was this: He proposed she should continue to board where she was, under the same restriction she had been, till he could prepare for sending her to a convent. Poor man! he flattered himself that time, and the pious council that would there be given her, would reclaim, and make a thorough convert of her; and that, when sensible of her past errors, they might one day live happy together.

*Magdalena* was soon informed of her husband's intentions, and, on this occasion, exerted all her artifice;—she pretended to think of the resolution he had taken concerning her, with all the gratitude it really deserved;—she said, that she  
was



was ashamed of her past misconduct, and desired nothing more than to be hid, for some time, from the world; adding, that tho' she could not as yet bring herself to love her husband, she would endeavour to do it, and merit a pardon from him.

SHE so well acted her part, that the good people of the house were deceived into a belief of her sincerity, and kept a less watchful eye over her than they ought. The baronet, who, as we have since been informed, had his spies continually about the street, found means either to speak or give a letter to her, thro' a window, where she was frequently permitted to look out. A woman came one day, as on a message from her husband, and *Magdalena* following her to the door, under the pretence of saying something to her, which she had forgot while in the room, they both flew out of the house together with such precipitation, that tho' they were pursued with all imaginable speed, they got clear off. Some chairmen, who have a stand in the street, say, that a hackney-coach, with one gentleman in it, stood ready to receive them, a little beyond the corner.

THIS last deception has so much turned the heart of *Clodius*, that he seems to take no great pains for discovering the place of her retreat; and the little search he has made has certainly been more for form's sake, than out of a real desire of finding her.

— THIS is all I am able to acquaint you with, concerning this young hypocrite; and, indeed, it cannot be supposed her future fate will be worth enquiring into. I

I HAVE sent you the books mentioned in your last, and am, with the sincerest good wishes, my dear *Hermione*,

Yours, &c.

BELLIZA.



### EPISTLE CXXXIV.

From EUSEBIA to MIRA, on that lady's having seemed to hint it, as her opinion, that the present age (bad as it is) does not exceed the former ones, either in folly or impiety.

Madam,

**A**S every word that falls from the incomparable *Mira* is a kind of text to all who hear her, what you said, in the last conversation we had together, concerning the enormities of the past and present age, has ever since dwelt upon my mind. You were pleased to say, that in all times the world had abounded in vice and folly, and brought some examples of both from ancient records, which, you seemed to think, could not be outdone by any we see at present.

I AM, indeed, madam, very ready to allow, that history has transmitted to us accounts of some crimes, which it is not in the power of all hell's invention to exceed;—that both vice and folly have, in former times, been practised to the utmost excess; but then, you must also allow, that instances of this kind were rare;—that the propensity was not epidemical;—that a depravity of morals had not spread itself thro' the

the whole body of the people ;— that wickedness was not the mode, nor any one ashamed of virtue, and good sense, as, I am sorry to say, is now the case, some few, a very few, in comparison with the whole, excepted.

DID any age produce the wild extremes this has done ? I could mention numberless instances ; but there needs no more than what is just now in the mouth of every one, and is of so flagrant a kind, as I doubt not but will record us to all posterity, as a generation both weak and impious ; but what, perhaps, is yet a more mortifying reflection, render us, while living, the just ridicule of all the nations round us, and make them say of us, with the poet,

*Religion's bright authority they dare,  
And yet are slaves to superstitious fear.*

AFTER what I have said, I believe it is almost needless to tell you, I mean that unaccountable panic which all London was in, on the prophecy of a poor lunatic. You saw with what precipitation numbers hurried out of town, and those who were prevented from going, either by shame, or the necessity of business, till the very night, on which the dreadful calamity was predicted, then left their houses, and chose rather to hazard all the ill accidents of the night-air, than trust the Providence of God at home in their own closets ; as if the vengeance of the Almighty, if destined to fall on them, could not reach them in their flight : Yet this behaviour, ridiculous as it appears now, even to those guilty of it, I can forgive, as it certainly proceeded from a justifiable terror of the deserved wrath of an offended



fended deity. The direful apprehensions they were under, from the consciousness of their crimes, would not suffer them to consider from what mouth the judgment was denounced, or, that the only means of averting it was prayer and penitence; but what shall we say of that glaring impiety, that audacious boldness, with which this latter tremor is succeeded.—The so-much-dreaded night was no sooner over, than people made a jest, not only of their past fears, but of the power of heaven.—The name of an *earthquake*, of late so terrible, is now become a subject of pleasantry.—The very silly, but inoffensive terms of a *route*, a *drum*, and a *drum-major*, are now exchanged for that of an *earthquake*:—Footmen run up and down with cards of invitation to their lady's *earthquakes*:—A new mode of dress, for the head, is sold in the shops, under the name of *earthquake caps*.—What can all this be deemed, but an impious deriding of that tremendous judgment we have lately twice felt the menaces of? Produce, madam, if you can, one instance parallel to this. If people formerly were guilty of crimes, they acted them in corners; they did not openly affront heaven, and avow a contempt of divine wrath. O! may we not provoke too far long-suffering mercy; in which prayer, I know, you will readily join with,

Madam,

Your most obedient servant,

EUSEBIA,

EPISTLE



## EPISTLE CXXXV.

*From ASTREA to MIRA, with a poem which that lady had expressed a great desire to read.*

*Madam,*

**A**RDELLA, tho' she fears your judgment, depends so much on your good nature, as to permit me to send you the verses you have heard so often mentioned.

I BELIEVE, that on perusal, you will be surprized she never would suffer it to be presented to the person for whom she intended it, and believe, with me, that the lady of that excellent patriot lost a great deal of pleasure by *Ardella's* excess of modesty;—but I forbear to take up your time, with any remarks of my own, and am, with the greatest friendship and respect,

Madam, your most obedient servant,

ASTREA.

*On the birth of the first-born son of Sir WATKIN-WILLIAMS WYNNE, Bart.*

*An irregular ODE.*

I.

**S**Natch'd from eternity's tremendous brink, \*  
My fate suspended, and death's icy hand  
A while withdrawn: E're my reprieve expires,  
And I for ever in oblivion sink,

\* The authorefs was just recovered from a long and dangerous fit of sickness, when she wrote these verses.

Let

Let me the debt, which truth, and love,  
And mighty gratitude demand,  
Well as I may, discharge. The long enfeebled  
muse

My active fancy re-inspires,  
Again her force I prove,  
And my warm wish the darling theme pursues.

## II.

THE reigning prince let *Colley* sing,  
And tune to royal praise the venal string;  
For court, or country, let the statesman toil,  
His sleepless hours employ  
How to be safe, or to be great;  
Let priests, and lawyers, clearest truths destroy,  
Unnecessary doubts create,  
By fruitless vain debate;  
And puzzling querists the vast world embroil,  
In mad disputes, 'twixt town and stage,  
Who chuses may engage;  
The task I readily remit;  
Let softer topicks be my part;  
Let beauty, innate worth, and wit,  
Employ my pen, as they attract my heart.  
Do thou, O *Wynne*! but smile upon my lays;  
Let me thy licens'd laureat be,  
I'll seek no other praise,  
No other dignity.

## III.

CEASE, cease, my muse, then to complain,  
Begin, at once, the joyous strain!  
Cast all thy darksome thoughts away,  
And sing the blest, the happiest day,  
That we in time's long æra find,  
The day to which we owe  
The best of gifts, the best that woman-kind  
Could dispense, or heav'n bestow.

## IV. WHAT



## IV.

WHAT cannot fancy reach!—in my mind's  
eye,

I see the suff'ring charmer patient lie  
Amidst the rack of nature, and of sense,  
Entail'd upon us all for *Eve's* offence :  
Around her couch I see the matrons wait,  
Fear, mix'd with hope, decypher'd in each face ;  
While trembling virgins, as befits their state,  
A greater distance keep,  
And, pangs yet unexperienc'd, weep,  
Equally anxious for th' impending fate,  
'Twixt life and death, so small a space.  
All in devoutest oraisons unite ;  
Attending angels catch the pious prayers,  
And swift convey them to th' Almighty's ears ;  
Sudden, the beauteous babe springs forth to light,  
Disperses every care,  
Joy of all eyes, and glads the parent-fair.  
The father all in miniature confest,  
Each social virtue, every noble aim,  
That warms his gen'rous breast,  
The little patriot-infant's charms proclaim.  
The ravish'd gazers, late absorb'd in fear,  
A different extreme disclose ;  
With wild delights each eye-ball glows,  
And every face does transport wear,  
Some press to kiss his lilly hands,  
And some his feet :  
Others, more useful, bring the swadling-bands,  
Or for the welcome guest prepare the meat ;  
But who, in proper attitude, can paint  
The new-made mother?—Her own yearning  
smiles,  
When clasping to her breast the lovely boy,  
Alone can speak  
Th' unutterable love ! th' unutterable joy !

Al

All colours are too faint !  
 All language is too weak !  
 What she must feel conception's self beguiles !

## V.

Hail heav'n-lov'd day, if poets prophets are,  
 The time will be when thou shalt claim  
 'Place 'mong the first i'th' kalendar of fame,  
 Wrote by un-erring hand,  
 Nought shall thy rising glories mar,  
 But, to time's end, fair and unblotted stand.  
 More dear to *Britons* than when sacred rites  
 (As ancient history recites)  
 On each revolving seventh, at *Freya's* \* shrine,  
 By *Druids* celebrated, wak'd the morn,  
 Nor ended till the setting sun  
 Had his diurnal motion run ;  
 For blessings nearer to divine  
 Be now remark'd : A second patriot born,  
 And *Albion's* hopes restor'd. Auspicious day !  
 Thro' the wide circle of the year,  
 On thee, let joy her brightest visage wear,  
 And no dull cares her charms allay,  
 Henceforth devoted be  
 To gratitude, and jollity.  
 Let morning prayers thy bounties own,  
 And flowing bowls thy evenings crown,  
 While the unfading myrtle, and the bays,  
 Adorn each brow, and speak thy praise.

\* A Goddess worshiped by the ancient *Britons*, to whom they devoted one day in every week, and called it after her, *Freya*, or *Friday*, on which day the young hero of this poem was born.

EPISTLE

## EPISTLE CXXXVI.

*From EMILIA to SOPHRONIA, with an account of the marriage of BRILLIANTE, and the unhappy fate of her forsaken lover.*

*Madam,*

**T**HE concern, my cousin *Brillante* tells me, you have always been so good to express for every thing relating to her, assures me you will excuse the trouble of a letter from one, who has the honour to be known to you only by name; since I presume to take this liberty for no other reason, than to acquaint you with what has happened to her, since her arrival in these parts; and which is, indeed, too shocking for her to be able to repeat herself.

You know, madam, that being determined to marry the man she loved, she quitted *London*, and came down with him to my house, hoping to have the ceremony of their nuptials over, before the unhappy person, she abandoned, could hear any thing of it.

SHE was certainly induced to act in this manner, thro' a tender compassion for the sufferings of a man, who had so long loved her, and had once thought himself so near the accomplishment of his wishes. She imagined, that to be told she had disposed of herself to another, after the thing was over, and past recall, especially compleated at so great a distance, would be less grievous to him,



him, than if celebrated in the same town with him, and where he would continually hear some particular or other, on a subject so disagreeable to him. She has often said to me, that she hoped he had resolution, and resentment enough, to cure both his love and despair, when certain how ineffectual either of these passions would be, and that before she returned to *London*, he would be able to erase from his mind, all those ideas which had been so destructive to his peace.

BUT alas! how terribly was she deceived by these flattering expectations:—The jealous lover, who, by her late behaviour to him, had some suspicion of his misfortune, and had spies upon her, who observed all her motions, was soon informed to what place she had retired,—who it was that accompanied her in the journey, and on what design they went. He immediately followed, attended only by one servant, resolving, by some means or other, to break off the match; but arrived not till the next day after the consummation:—He put up at a neighbouring inn, and wrote a little billet to *Brillante*, which according to his order, his man delivered into her own hands:—I have seen it.—it contains these lines:

*To the inconstant and unjust BRILLIANTE.*

“ *Madam,*

“ I KNOW too much not to be impatient to  
 “ I know the whole of my misfortune.—The  
 “ last, and only favour, I shall ever intreat, is  
 “ an opportunity of speaking three words to  
 “ you in private, which, I hope, you will not  
 “ refuse to the much-injured,

“ LEONTIUS.”  
 JUDGE,

JUDGE, madam, of the consternation she must be in, on receiving this, and knowing how near the author of it was.—She answered it, however, in these terms, as she has since told me:

“ Sir,

“ **T**H<sup>O</sup> the power over all my actions is  
 “ now, by love and law, another’s right,  
 “ yet I think too much is owing to the long af-  
 “ fection you have borne me, to refuse answering  
 “ your letter; but must desire to be excused  
 “ from any private conversation, as it is not  
 “ consistent with my honour, nor can be of any  
 “ service to your peace. I am sorry you have  
 “ taken this journey on my account;—but, as  
 “ you are here, shall make no scruple of receiv-  
 “ ing a public visit from you, on the foot of  
 “ friendship; but if you cannot bring yourself  
 “ to this, entreat you will return, and hope you  
 “ have more generosity, than to do any thing  
 “ which may disturb the tranquility of

“ BRILLIANTE.”

’Tis plain, that ’till this moment he was not certain of her being actually married, and had flattered himself with being arrived early enough to attempt some opposition; for, on reading this confirmation under her own hand, and finding all was over, he was no longer master of himself.—A sudden fit of madness that instant seized him,—*Then there remains no more*, cried he, with a sigh, which, his servant told me, seemed to cleave his heart; after which, pausing a little, *Yes*, said he, *there is still one thing to be done*.—With these words, snatching up a pistol, which lay on a table near him, he flew out of the inn,

and came directly to my house, thundered at the gate, and demanded to speak with the bride and bridegroom.—The fury that appeared in his countenance, and the tone of his voice, as well as the pistol in his hand, so frightened the servant that opened the gate, that he was about to shut it again; *Brillante* and myself were sitting.—She started from her chair in sight of him, and had not power to speak.—*Then you are married, madam*, cried he, raving, *and I am come too late to offer the sacrifice, I intended, at the altar.*—*Brillante* was about to say something, but could not, and she fell into a swoon almost at the feet of him who had occasioned it:—For my part I was so terrified, that I was neither capable of offering her any assistance, nor of saying any thing to him.—On seeing her fall,—*Dead,—dead, by heavens*, cried he, with a look full of horror, *conscious guilt has been her executioner, and despair's mine.*—In speaking this, he clapped the pistol to his head, and discharged it with so exact an aim, that his brains flew out that instant, and dashed the bridegroom in the face as he entered the room.

NEVER was there so dreadful a scene for a man, who had been but one day a husband.—All words would be too weak to describe it, and your own conception must better present you with the representation.

THE horrid deed was perpetrated but yesterday:—We are all in confusion, and heaven only knows the consequences.—*Brillante* is extremely ill, her husband appears greatly dissatisfied, and, I much fear, that the death of the unhappy gentleman is not the last mischief attending this marriage.

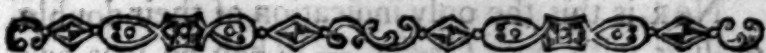
As



As soon as *Brillante* is in a condition, I doubt not but she will write to you herself; which, if she is not soon, you may expect a more full information than can as yet be given, by her who is, with a profound respect, madam,

Your most obedient servant,

EMILIA.



### EPISTLE CXXXVII.

*From BELLIZA to HERMIONE, with some further particulars concerning CLODIUS, MAGDALENA, and the baronet; and the character of FULVIA.*

*My dear HERMIONE,*

I Thought I should have had nothing further to say on the story, which was the subject of the two last letters you received from me:—Nor indeed is there any thing astonishing in what I have to relate, when we consider how much the present age is influenced by self-interest, and how little honour and fidelity there is to be found, even among those who make the greatest shew of both, when a prospect of advantage tempts them to act a contrary part. The people of this house, who seemed in such confusion and concern at *Magdalena's* escape, are now, by circumstances which amount almost to a proof, more than suspected to have been instrumental in it, or, at least, to have connived at her departure. Instead of assisting, as certainly they ought to have done, the injured husband, in the measures he was about to pursue for the retaking the per-

fidious fugitive, they amused him with fictitious stories, and baffled his search by false directions, which, they pretended, had been given them by persons who had casually seen her; and this it was that made him weary of the fruitless toil, and resolve to give himself, and friends, no further trouble on that account.

NOR is this the only indication of their double dealing with poor *Clodius*:—When he was advised, by his friends, to take the method commonly used in such cases, that of advertising his eloped wife in the public papers, in order to prevent her from bringing on him debts, which would have been a much worse misfortune than the loss of her, they keep him from doing it, by persuading him that she would soon return repentant, and become ashamed of her past follies, and make a better wife, than, perhaps, she would have been if she never had transgressed.

THE man is certainly of a most forgiving nature; he still loves the perfidious *Magdalena*, and is easily prevailed on to give credit to what he so much wishes; and tho' I cannot say much in favour of his understanding in this point, I can by no means join with those, who cry, that whatever he shall hereafter suffer, by his remissness, is undeserving of compassion.

I CANNOT take leave of you, my dear *Hermione*, without saying something of *Fulvia*, whom, since my last, I have had the pleasure of seeing, and have heard some particulars of her story from a person well acquainted with it.—She is not a native of this kingdom, but was born and educated in a region pretty remote from

from this, — the baronet being on his travels, happened to see and fall in love with her: — The agreeableness of his person, his wit, his address, and, above all, the vows he made of everlasting constancy, struck too deep an impression on her youthful heart, she being then scarce fifteen years of age: — She quitted her parents, friends, and country for his sake: — She accompanied him in all his voyages, and journies, and came to *England*, where she lived with him for the space of ten or eleven years, in all things as a wife, except the name, behaving, during that whole time, and since her unhappy separation from him, with the utmost sweetness, modesty, and œconomy. — In fine, I know no woman more amiable, either as to the qualities of the mind, or the beauties of the person, and I never look on her without thinking it a great pity she was not placed in a sphere, where her perfections might have shone to more advantage.

AH! how inconstant is the heart of man! — How prone to change! — What but the desire of novelty could make *Magdalena*, even for a moment, rival the lovely and deserving *Fulvia*, in the esteem of her dear baronet.

If ever the little winged god should inspire your breast with tender sentiments, may they be in favour of some one who differs from the generality of his sex, in this particular, which is the sincere wish of, my dear *Hermione*,

Yours, &c.

BELLIZA.





## EPISTLE CXXXVIII.

*From PORTIA to the E. of \*\*\*\*, on his having attempted to seduce her virtue, after he had conferred some favours on her, under the pretence of an honourable and disinterested friendship.*

*My lord,*



EW things could have happened to give me greater pain, than the declaration contained in the last letter I had the honour to receive from you.—While I thought myself secure of one sincere friend, to whom I might have recourse, in the many vexations it is my fate to be involved in, I never thought I was wholly miserable.—How cruel is it in you then, to deprive me of that only consolation!—Good heaven! could I ever have imagined you would have taken advantage of those necessities you seemed to commiserate with so much tenderness!—No;—nothing but yourself could have convinced me you were capable of so ungenerous an action, or, that a design of such a base kind could have been couched under such generous and seemingly disinterested principles.—How despicable and inconsistent are the arguments of men of the finest understanding, when used in favour of vice! You exclaim against the injurious treatment of my husband towards me, yet would persuade me to justify his conduct by my own, and give him an excuse for his ingratitude and ill-nature.—You say the figure to which his extravagancies have reduced me, is unworthy of my birth and merit; yet you

you would bring me to make one, not only unworthy of them, but of my reason also.—What could my worst enemy wish more, than to see me add shame and guilt to the misfortunes I already labour under?—Yet to draw me to this last degree of wretchedness, you would have me believe, is the effect of love.—Ah! how is the purest and noblest of all passions profaned; when such gross and sensual desires are ascribed to it!—Defend, ye guardian angels, all those of my sex, who wish to continue virtuous, from giving credit to such vain delusions!—May they, like me, discover the black polluted fiend, tho' he appears as an angel of light.—What are your offers but as so many baits to lure me to perdition?—What would my acceptance of them make me but a gawdy slave, ridiculously miscalled a mistress?—No, my lord, be assured, that no distress, no exigence fortune can lay upon me, shall ever reduce me to become the despicable thing you would have me.—The vows I made before the holy altar are indelibly imprinted on my heart, as well as registered in heaven; nor can any thing on the part of him, to whom I am thus bound, erase them thence.—Religion, reputation, duty, all laws, both human and divine, oblige me to beg, to starve, to wander round the world a vagrant with him, rather than shine in all the pomp of guilty grandeur with any other man.—If, instead of that mighty passion you affect to profess for me, you feel the least real good-will towards me, by that I beseech you, nay, take the liberty to conjure you, to avoid seeing me for the future.—Leave me to my miseries, nor seek to add to them, by reminding me how greatly I deceived myself, when I imagined you found any thing

worthy of a sincere friendship, or regard, in the unhappy

PORTIA.

*P. S.* I send your lordship back the last purse of guineas, which some necessities, you observed in the family, made you leave yesterday on my table, and which, I thank God, are no ways embezzled.—My first and most ardent prayers henceforward shall be, that heaven will vouchsafe some means, by which I may return those others also, which my mistaken, and too flattering opinion of your friendship, induced me to accept.—This may appear to you, perhaps, as a piece of ill-judged pride; but I shall give myself little pain on that head, as I am conscious of the motive whence it proceeds.—The proofs of pity I can receive with a becoming gratitude, but shall always reject with scorn and indignation whatever is the bribe of vice.



### EPISTLE CXXXIX.

*From CAMILLA at Berlin, to ASTREA in London; with an account of what she had observed in that court, and a remarkable incident, which happened in her presence, and shewed the great goodness of his Prussian majesty towards his subjects.*

*Dear madam,*

*I* T is now three weeks since my arrival; but I forbore writing, till enabled to give an account of something more worthy your attention than any thing relating to myself.

MON-



MONSIEUR and madame de \*\*\*\*, who were here before me, received me with a great deal of civility, and introduced me to all those, whom they had made acquaintance with.—They carried me to see the fine buildings on the river *Spree*, the arsenals, and the great canal, which extends itself, from the abovementioned river, whence it is cut, quite to the *Elbe*: We also saw the palace, and the court being then at *Potzdam*, we had the opportunity of taking a view of the royal apartments with more liberty, than otherwise we could have done. I cannot say much in praise of the architecture, tho' it is magnificent enough, and extremely convenient:—The furniture is very rich, and all the state-rooms are ornamented with most curious pieces of painting.—His *Prussian* majesty, it seems, is highly delighted with that science, and gives the greatest encouragement to the professors of it, as indeed he does to all who excel in any art whatsoever.—In the king's closet are the pictures of many illustrious personages, drawn at full length; but one, above all the rest, attracted my eyes, not only because it appeared to me to have something peculiarly lovely and majestic in it, but also because it had a great resemblance of a portrait, in miniature, which you wear at your watch, and, I know, set the highest value on. I asked the man, who shewed us the apartments, and belongs to them, for whom that amiable piece was designed?—*It is, madam*, said he, affecting to mistake which it was I meant, *the prince successor of Sweden, the illustrious consort of our princess royal*.—I then told him, that to satisfy my curiosity, he must acquaint me, who it was that was placed between the prince he named, and the princess *Amelia of Prussia*.—I

could perceive the fellow smile at this demand ; but was either unable to inform me, or had some private reasons for not doing so. — I was not, however, long kept in suspense, monsieur de \*\*\*\* took me aside, and told me, he had often seen the original at *Paris*, and that it was, indeed, drawn for the person that I had imagined.

I CANNOT but say, that the sight of this picture, and the manner in which it was disposed, put some conjectures into my head, which time alone can reveal the truth of, so will not trouble you with the repetition of them, at least in writing ; — how I may be tempted to talk of it at my return, I will not answer.

THE whole royal family, in a few days after, coming back to *Berlin*, I had the honour of seeing the two queens, and princess *Amelia*, in the gardens of the palace. — As I doubt not but some description of these princesses will be agreeable to you, I shall give you as exact a one as in my power : — The queen-dowager has somewhat very graceful in her look and mien ; — her present majesty, without being a beauty, has more charms than many who are reputed such ; and the princess *Amelia* has, to a perfect regularity of features, and delicacy of complexion, a certain sweetness added, which physiognomists will tell you, is the infallible indication of a tender, generous mind.

I DID not see the king till after several days, tho' I went to the drawing-room, the opera-house, and other public places, in the hope of gratifying my curiosity, with all it now had to demand. — Some said, his majesty was slightly indisposed

indisposed with a cold; but others, who, I believe, were better acquainted with the humour of this prince, told me, the occasion of his shutting himself up was on the account of some affairs of very great importance, the dispatch of which he did not think proper to entrust to his secretaries, or any other of his ministers, he always writing all letters of moment with his own hand.

HENCE it is, madam, that the councils of this monarch remain so impenetrable a mystery, and that his designs are so seldom disappointed; nor is the secrecy he observes, of less advantage to the success of his affairs abroad, than it is to preserve a due order and tranquility at home. → The great officers of state being all kept equally in the dark, as to their royal master's pleasure, no one has reason to be jealous of the other, for being more entrusted than himself, as, in other courts, is frequently the case:—Neither is there any prime minister, who, presuming on the confidence reposed in him, insolently lords it over his fellow peers, executes his own will in his sovereign's name, arrogates to himself the merit of all the *good*, and throws the blame of all the *ill* upon the monarch.

You will say, perhaps, that for a king to consult only with himself, is ruling with an absolute authority, and altogether inconsistent with the liberties of the people.—I grant it is so, and that such an unlimited power lodged in the hands of a bad prince, would be terrible indeed;—and yet I know not, if a nation does not suffer more when such power is delegated by law to a plurality; because there might then be many



tyrants instead of one. The king of *Prussia*, 'tis true, is arbitrary; but the use he makes of being so, you will presently see in the following instance.

LAST *Sunday* morning *M. de \*\*\** came to my lodgings, and told me, he had just seen the king returning from taking the air in his coach, and that it was highly probable, he would dine that day in public;—on which I agreed to go with that gentleman, his lady, and some other company, to the palace about noon.

ON our entering the great chamber of state, we found that monsieur *de \*\*\** had not been deceived in his conjecture. A vast many people, led by the same desire as ourselves, were already there, none being denied admittance, who made a tolerable appearance.—We had not waited long before the king, the two queens, the princes his brothers, and princess *Amelia*, came into the room, and placed themselves at table. I will not pretend to tell you the number of the dishes that were served up, nor the variety of meats they were composed of, I shall only say, that all was sumptuous, elegant, and befitting the dignity of so great a prince, with whom, indeed, my attention was too much taken up, as it was the first time of seeing him, to regard any thing else.—I perceived he eat little, but talked a good deal, and was extremely pleasant, not only with the royal family, who sat at table, but also with the nobles who waited behind the chair, frequently turning to them on the one side, and the other.—This a little surprized me, as I had heard he was of so reserved a temper; but I have been since informed, he is only so in matters

matters of state, and in all other things communicative and facetious.

As to the person of his majesty, it is extremely graceful, tho' not tall;—his eyes are the most sparkling, and withal the most penetrating I ever beheld, and in them, as well as in all his features, and that air, which accompanies his every word and gesture, there is a certain dignity, a peculiar greatness, which, without being told so, would make one know, not only that he was a king, but likewise that he was worthy of being so.

THIS illustrious company was just rising from table, when a woman, neat, but meanly dressed, pressed through the crowd, and all trembling and confused, threw herself at the king's feet, and presented him a petition, which I expected he would have put into the hands of some one or other of the noblemen, to have read to him at a more leisure hour, as it is the custom with most other princes, by which means, unless the person to whom it is given, who is generally the first lord in waiting, is previously acquainted with the affair, and made a friend of, the thing is utterly forgot, and the suppliant never the better for addressing;—but the heart of this monarch is of a different mould:—He will not commit the redress of any one of his subject's grievancies to the care of another, but, like the eye of heaven, will, himself, see into the truth of all things.—He took the paper, opened it, and examined the contents heedfully; but, as soon as he had finished, darted a furious look at the poor woman, which made my heart ache for her.—*Wherefore, said he, was I not told of this before?*

*fore?—Did not you know you had a king?—or did you imagine me a king in name alone, unwilling, or incapable of affording you protection.* To which the poor creature, with a faltering voice, replied, that she feared being too presuming, and had no friend to intercede for her to his majesty. *You need no friend but me,* said the king, with more mildness, *provided you have justice on your side, which to-morrow shall be examined into, and, if what you say be real, full reparation made you.* With these words he turned away, ordering one of the lords to bid her attend next day at the palace, which he accordingly did, and the poor woman went out of the room curtesying to every one as she passed, as much transported with joy, as she had lately been stupified with its opposite passion.

ALL this had been lost upon us, as I am a perfect stranger to the *German* language, if monsieur *De\*\*\*\**, who understands it very well, had not the goodness to interpret it to me. As we all were ignorant of the contents of the petition, he went the next day to court, on purpose to inform himself, both of the cause and event of the poor woman's complaint.

UPON his return, he obliged us with the following detail: It seems the husband of this poor woman had rented some lands by way of farm, of a nobleman belonging to court, for a certain term of years; but on his demise, the young heir refusing to stand to his father's agreement, turned him and his family out of doors, without any justifiable reason, but merely because he had been offered by another a larger rent than the former paid. The law, indeed, would have relieved him, but he had not money to contend with



with so powerful an adversary; he was at length cast into prison, and his family reduced to a most deplorable condition.

UNDER these oppressive and calamitous circumstances, he was advised to lay his unfortunate case at the throne of royal justice, which was done in the manner I have already related.

His majesty was no sooner convinced of the reality of the fact, than he ordered the young nobleman to release the man out of prison, by paying all the debts for which he was confined, to reinstate him in his farm, and likewise to give him a sum of money, as a reparation for the injuries he had caused him to sustain.

EVERY one highly applauded this equitable decision, tho' no less could be expected from a prince, whose ears are ever open to the complaints of even the meanest subjects in his dominions, who hears to redress, and takes pleasure in humbling the pride of the oppressor.

IN fine, madam, by the accounts every one gives of him, he may justly be called the common father of his people.—All his endeavours are to make them great, good, and happy. He is strictly impartial in his rewards and punishments;—he cherishes virtue wheresoever it is found, and severely chastises vice, in those whom milder means will not reclaim.

THIS is only a slight sketch of this excellent prince's character, yet has it taken up so much of my paper, that I have but just room to tell you, that my next shall present you with something, I know,

know, you will be pleased to hear, concerning  
the charming princess *Amelia*; and that I am,

With the greatest respect, madam,

Your most obedient servant,

CAMILLA.



### EPISTLE CXL.

*From STELLA to MELANTHE, on being told that  
lady had ridiculed her retired way of life, im-  
puting it to poverty, and the loss of a lover.*

*Madam,*

**I** HAVE so long since found out how  
little the friendships of this world are  
to be depended on, that I am seldom  
surprised at hearing any of my actions  
censured by those, who by their professions I  
should rather have expected would have defended  
them. I must say, however, that I flattered my-  
self you would not have been among the number  
I have mentioned, much less could have be-  
lieved, you would have exerted your great ta-  
lent of ridicule, on a subject which, if true, ought  
to excite compassion in a generous mind.

You pretend, it seems, to have discovered  
motives for my living in a retired way, which,  
thank heaven, I am far from knowing myself;  
—but supposing it were true, that by the sudden  
death of an unjust guardian, I were, indeed, de-  
prived of the best part of my fortune, and also,  
on that occasion, I had lost a lover, who was  
very dear to me, and to whom I expected to  
have

have been married, were either of these misfortunes fit matters for mirth?

BUT how easy is it for ill-nature to convert every thing to its own purpose!—How different my reasons for retirement are, from those you ascribe for it, the world will see, in a very little time, and those, who at present are witty at my expence, be obliged to take shame to themselves.

IN the mean time, I take the liberty, on account of our former friendship, to advise you to be less extravagant in your pleasantries on me, as they will hereafter turn more to your confusion, than at present they do to mine.—Thus much I will assure you, that tho' I have sustained some loss by the death of my guardian, it is not considerable enough to hinder me from appearing in the manner I have been accustomed; and as to the match being broke off with Mr. L. I shall always do that gentleman the justice to say, he has neither acted a dishonourable nor ungenerous part, nor am I the disconsolate and despairing creature, you have taken so much pains to represent me.—On his return from *Boloign*, you will be convinced of this truth: till when, you would do well to suspend your judgment, lest it should be found as little to be relied upon, as your sincerity towards a person who never gave you any cause of offence, and, perhaps, of all your acquaintance, was the farthest from suspecting it was in your nature, to treat any one in the manner you have done the justly resentful

STELLA.

EPISTLE





## EPISTLE CXLI.

*From ARANTHE in the country, to OLIVIA in town, in answer to a letter she had received from that lady, testifying her disrelish of all the pleasures of London, and inviting her to come down, and partake with her the more innocent amusements she enjoyed at the seat of lady B\*\*\*\*.*

*My dear OLIVIA,*

**R**ECEIVED yours with that satisfaction I always do every thing that comes from you; but, I assure you, what afforded me the most was, that part wherein you acquaint me with your perfect recovery from that indisposition you laboured under when I left London, and of which, indeed, I was extremely impatient to hear. As for any other intelligence, than such as relates to the welfare of my friends, it employs little of my attention.—What is it to me, who loves who? What wife has eloped? Or what virgin beguiled her parents vigilance? Who made the finest shew on the birth-day? What long expecting courtier has at last obtained a place? Or who has made, or lost, his fortune at play? The place and company I now am in, has given me more refined ideas;—I now despise and pity the vain pursuits, the fantastic pleasures, and empty, fleeting joys of the giddy town, and can sit down in a shady bower, at the end of a long-living gallery of aged trees, and say with Cowley,

*All this world's noise appears to me  
But as a dull, ill-acted comedy.*

EPISTLE

O! my dear *Olivia*, could you but truly taste the innocent delights, the tranquil uninterrupted joys a country life affords, you would not lose one moment of life in that scene of endless hurry and confusion, but fly to this enchanting recess, where life is life indeed;—where nature pours forth all her hoard of sweets, regaling every sense;—where heaven's own hand, which way soever you turn, spreads out the beauteous prospect, and the art of man aims only to preserve the divine original entire, and not to disguise it by imaginary embellishments.

I HAD your promise, when we parted, that you would soon follow me down.—I told lady B\*\*\* of it, and she impatiently expects you.—When walking together thro' the fragrant shades, or lying reclined upon a mossy bank, in a cool grot, close by the side of a clear stream, which gently flows and murmurs o'er the pebbles in its passage, we wish *Olivia* here, and cry, 'tis only she is wanting.

HASTE then, my dear *Olivia*, to compleat our happiness, and begin your own.—Believe me a person, whom you have been pleased to allow a tolerable judge in most things, that nature never formed a scene more delectable than what you will here be presented with.—I never look round me, without these lines of Mr. *Waller's* coming into my mind,

*Sure heav'n has left this spot of earth uncurs'd,  
To shew how all things were created first.*

BUT I flatter myself I need throw no temptations in your way, and that as soon as convenience

nience permits, your own inclination, of itself,  
will be sufficient to bring you to, my dear *Olivia*,  
Yours, &c.

ARANTHE.



### EPISTLE CXLI.

*From MIRA to EUPHROSINE, on false breeding,  
or an affectation of complaisance and politeness.*

*My dear EUPHROSINE,*

**H**ERE are a sort of people in the world, pretty frequently met with, who, by an aukward imitation of manners, to which they have not been accustomed, not only render themselves extremely ridiculous, but also are equally troublesome to others:—I mean your pretenders to good-breeding:—The affectation without the reality, produces a thousand impertinencies, to which I know not if a downright abruptness of behaviour is not preferable.

THERE is a reigning mistake in most parents concerning this point.—It is not those accomplishments, which persons of condition usually give their children, that, in my judgment, constitutes the whole of good-breeding, tho' I own they very much contribute towards it.—One may sing, dance, play well on various sorts of instruments, have a perfect understanding in music, and speak the *French* and *Italian* languages with the greatest fluency; yet, after all, be very far from what I call well-bred.—True politeness



politeness is not a science to be learned in schools.—Nature must bestow a genius:—That genius must be improved by reading works of delicacy and spirit, and heightened by a freedom of conversation with persons of taste.—It is an enemy to all kind of constraint, does every thing with ease, and, tho' it is sure never to offend, it also never is at the expence of flattery to oblige.—What the witty Earl of *Rochester* said of poetry, I think may be properly applied to good-breeding.—His words are these:

*In poetry, that soonest wins the heart,  
Where most of nature's seen, and least of art.*

FORM and ceremony, things which many people study, and take so much pains to be well versed in all the punctilioes of, spoil the best education, and make the person who practises them disagreeable and tiresome.

SIR *Thomas \*\*\*\**, who, you know, I greatly esteem on account of his honesty and good-nature, brought his new-married bride to visit me the other day.—I had been told she was a fine-bred woman, and received her in a manner suitable to that character; but, dear *Euphrosine*, how much did I find myself at a loss, either to look or speak before her.—She so pester'd me with compliments and assurances of the great sense of the high honour I had done her, in permitting her to wait upon me, that I had scarce a word to answer in return.—I offered her a pinch of snuff, in order to gain a moment's truce; but she happening to have her right-hand glove off, took the box from me with her left, and laid it in the window, 'till she had drawn on her other glove,

glove, saying, she would not be so rude to touch my snuff with naked fingers. — I called for tea sooner than I would have done, in the hope of shortening her visit; but, unluckily, put sugar into her cup, without asking whether she liked it, or not. — She sipp'd and sipp'd, and all the time praised the tea, as the most excellent she had ever tasted. — Sir *Thomas* not having observed that I had put sugar into the cup, cried, *You are certainly, my dear, the best judge of the flavour, drinking it, as you do, without sugar.* — On which I remembered I had been guilty of an indecorum, in not consulting her palate on that account, and asked her pardon. — She appeared in a most terrible confusion, and told Sir *Thomas*, she was surprized he should mention any thing of it. — *Truly*, said the knight, with his usual simplicity, *I was quite ignorant of the matter; but since it is so, I think I have more reason to be surprized to see you punish yourself by drinking what, I know, you have an aversion to, rather than speak a word to prevent it.* To which she replied, oh! fie, Sir *Thomas*, how can you talk so! Where do you think I was bred? Then turning to me, made a long apology for the abruptness of her husband. — I took his part, but durst not say too much, for fear of continuing the dispute. At last they took their leave; — I waited on them to the head of the stair-case; but the good lady so often turned back to prevent me, and dropt me so many curtesies, that returning them made my knees ach for an hour after.

As I have the most perfect regard for every branch of your family, I would wish you to warn your youngest sister, who, I hear, is just come from the board-school, not to mistake

this



this overstrained complaisance for true politeness. She may possibly have acquired a certain stiffness of behaviour under the tuition of her formal governess, which, if not by time softened into a more easy habit, must render her other accomplishments of less merit in the eyes of the discerning. I am, my dear *Euphrosine*,

Yours, &c.

MIRA.

F I N I S.





22  
This overlanded compliance for the purpose  
The may possibly have acquired a certain number  
of horses under the sanction of her former gover-  
ness, which, it may be time referred into a more  
early date, and render her other accounts in-  
correct of her time in the care of the British  
ing, I am, my dear friend,

Yours, &c.

Mrs.

W. I. S.



289

2ll; A<sup>6</sup>; B-N<sup>12</sup>